

Tales from of Ancient





SULKY ACHILLES.

TALES OF ANCIENT TROY

AND

THE ADVENTURES OF ULYSSES

EDITED BY

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FULLY ILLUSTRATED

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TALES OF ANCIENT TROY

TALES OF ANCIENT TROY.

CHAPTER I.

SULKY ACHILLES.

ONCE on a time there was a city named Troy. Paris, a son of Priam its king, had run away with a beautiful Greek lady, named Helen, the wife of Menelaus, King of Sparta. This wicked deed was the cause of Troy's fall, for Menelaus gathered all his Greek friends together, and they set sail for Troy, and took it after a siege of ten years.

The ten long years were nearly ended when a quarrel between Agamemnon, the leader, and Achilles, the first soldier, of the Greeks, seemed likely enough to give Troy another ten years' lease of life. The quarrel arose in this way. A town had been sacked in the neighborhood, and two beautiful captives had been taken. One, named Chryseis, was given to Agamemnon; and the other, Briseis, to Achilles.

The captive girl Chryseis was very dear to her father, a priest of Apollo. The priest came to Agamemnon and offered a ransom for his child; but Agamemnon refused him, and said his prayers and tears and bribes were all in vain. The story goes that the old man prayed to Apollo for vengeance, and his prayer was answered by a plague, which smote first the dogs and mules, and afterward the men.

When several wretched days had passed, and none knew who would be the next to sicken and die, Achilles accused Agamemnon

of being the cause of the plague ; that is, he got Calchas the priest to do it.

Calchas said if Agamemnon would send back his captive to her aged father, the plague might cease, but it never would leave the Greek army as long as Chryseis was detained in the camp. This advice made the king very wrathful, but after thinking it well over, he said he was willing to give up his captive ; only if he did so much, Achilles must also resign Briseis. This condition roused the anger of Achilles, and there was a stormy debate, which Nestor, the oldest and most prudent of the Greek leaders, strove to allay by his fatherly advice.

Nestor bade Agamemnon give up his captive, and told Achilles to be submissive to the chosen leader of the host. He was not very successful, however, for Achilles left the meeting in a great heat, and went to his tent, accompanied by his friend Patroclus.

Meanwhile Agamemnon, anxious to save the Greeks any further suffering, sent his fair captive back to her father ; but he was resolved that Achilles should not retain Briseis. He therefore despatched two heralds to Achilles' tent to fetch her away.

They went unwillingly ; Achilles, however, treated the heralds with respect, and resigned Briseis to them.

At the same time he vowed he would give no further help to the Greeks. " I will be as still as death itself," said he, " even if all the Greeks die." He then went to the sea-shore and vented the passionate thoughts of his heart to the waves. He even shed tears of vexation, and heaped curses on Agamemnon's head. While this was going on, the wise Ulysses took the other captive, Chryseis, home to her father ; and he, having embraced his restored daughter tenderly, prayed Apollo to stay the plague. The god heard his prayer, and the plague came to an end.

CHAPTER II.

MENELAUS AND PARIS.

IT has been said that the quarrel between the Greeks and Trojans arose about a very beautiful woman, named Helen, who was carried off by Paris, one of the handsomest princes of his time.

We can suppose Menelaus, Helen's husband, would feel very angry at this, and he would most gladly have fought a duel with Paris and spoiled his beauty, if he could have got at him; but Paris for a long time did not give him the chance. One day, however, toward the end of the weary siege, the dandy strolled out of the city with a smart panther-skin over his armor. Shaking gracefully a pointed spear in either hand, he dared the bravest Greek to mortal combat. The injured Menelaus soon spied his enemy, and leaped from his chariot to get at him, just as a lion bounds from a thicket. At the sight of the terrible man he had wronged, Paris drew back among the Trojans, while Hector, the bravest of them, rated his brother for his cowardice. "Unhappy Paris!" said he. "Better to have died a babe than to be a coward and make us all ridiculous!" "What you say is true," replied Paris; "but every one cannot be as brave as you are. I praise your courage; pray do not despise my beauty. Still, if you wish it," continued Paris, "I will fight Menelaus in solemn duel, and put an end to this weary war."

Hector was delighted at this, and went to tell the Greeks that his brother Paris would fight Menelaus. The news soon spread over the plain, and the Greeks rejoiced at the prospect of peace. While preparations for the duel were being made, the beautiful Helen drew near to old King Priam, who, with other ancients unfit for war, was basking in the sunshine on the wall. She pointed out to them the

notable chiefs, such as Agamemnon, Ulysses, and Ajax. While so engaged, a herald interrupted her with the tidings of the impending fight. Priam was sorry to hear it, for he loved his handsome son, and feared that he might soon be dead. With a heavy heart he ordered his cream-colored steeds to be yoked to his chariot, and was driven through the Scaean Gate to the plain, where a religious truce was being solemnized previous to the combat. Priam shared in the sacred rites, but returned to the city, not choosing to see his son's danger.

Hector and Ulysses, having prepared the lists, cast lots for the first throw, which fell to Paris. The dandy was splendidly arrayed. Homer describes his gilded armor, purple bands, silver buckles, and nodding horse-hair plume. He lifted his spear and threw it at Menelaus; it rang against his shield, but did no further harm. The Greek hero, before he returned the compliment, prayed the good old prayer, "God defend the right!" after which he hurled his javelin with all the strength of his arm. It pierced Paris' armor without wounding him. Before the Trojan had time to strike another blow, Menelaus drew his sword, and dealt his enemy a tremendous blow on the head. The sword, however, proved faithless, for it was broken off at the hilt. The Greek, uttering a few impatient words, rushed at his hated rival, and seizing the crest of his helmet, would have dragged him away, had not the embroidered band which fastened the helmet on given way, and left an empty headpiece in his hand. Tossing the smart casque among his followers, the Greek once more uplifted his deadly spear, and aimed it at his foeman's breast. But now Venus, the friend of Paris (because he had awarded her the apple of discord and prize of beauty), threw around him a veil of cloud, and conveyed him in safety to his chamber. When Helen saw him, she despised him, and said she wished he had died like a man. "Go again," said she, "and renew the fight. But no; better stay here, lest you be killed by Menelaus." She admired the man for his beauty, though she scorned him for being a coward.



MENELAUS AND PARIS.

CHAPTER III.

GENERAL AGAMEMNON.

THERE was a man among the Trojans, a first-rate archer, but rather covetous and mean of soul, named Pandarus. Although there was now a solemn truce, he thought that he would aim an arrow at Menelaus, and get glory by his death if possible.

The arrow soon flew from the bow of Pandarus, and wounded Menelaus in the shoulder. Agamemnon, who was standing by, grasped his brother's hand, and thinking he might be wounded to death, broke out into a passionate lamentation. He accused himself of being the cause of his brother's misfortune, and called the Trojans false and treacherous.

Menelaus assured his brother that the wound was not fatal; but as it was severe and painful, the physician Machaon was sent for. He came promptly, and attended the wounded man. While this was going on, the Trojans, thinking Pandarus had drawn his bow by order of their general, rushed forward in a body to attack the Greeks. This movement did not escape Agamemnon's eagle eye, and he flew from troop to troop, encouraging the brave, reproaching the timid. "We have no cause for fear," said he. "It is for guilty Troy to tremble!"

Meeting the King of Crete, Agamemnon embraced him, and thanked him for his gallant services. Meriones assured the General he was to be depended on. Ajax and his cloud of black heroes were next visited, their spears looking like an iron wood.

Speaking a few words of praise here, Agamemnon passed on to the aged Nestor, whose Pylian bands were a model of what a well-ordered

little army should be, — cavalry in front, footmen in the rear, and the doubtful ones between. Nestor bewailed his decaying strength, and said he was fitter now for the council-board than the glorious battlefield, but he would do his duty. When the General reached the soldiers of Ulysses, they seemed rather like men watching a fight afar off than heroes bearing the brunt of it.

“Why do your men stand idle?” asked the General. “Can you see, without blushing, brave men engaged and yourselves at ease?”

“Reproach us not,” replied Ulysses. “We are quite ready, and merely await the word of command.”

“Forgive me,” prayed Agamemnon; “you will understand my zeal for the common good. Haste, then, to the front.”

The General then passed on to Diomed, whom he also sharply reproved for being inactive. Diomed spoke not a word in reply, but sprang from his chariot, while his aid-de-camp Sthenelus made a boastful speech, for which Diomed rebuked him.

The battle now began to rage in terrible earnest. The spears flew in iron tempests. The shouts of triumph were heard, and the groans of dying men.

Antilochus, old Nestor's son, killed the first man that day. This was Echepolus the Trojan. Then Ajax slew a lovely youth, named Simoisius. Leucus, a friend of Ulysses, picked up the body, and was carrying it away, when a whizzing javelin struck him, and he dropped the corpse and fell dead upon it. Ulysses, seeing his friend thus suddenly laid low, rushed forward, and hurled his spear at the Trojan host. It lighted on the temples of Democoon, a son of Priam, and he fell dead with a piercing shriek. The fate of this gallant young prince spread dismay among those of his side. Even Hector seemed paralyzed, and slowly gave way. Many of the Trojans fled in confusion. The Greeks pressed on with loud shouts, and began to strip the dead of their armor. But a rally took place before long; the battle was renewed; and every soldier showed himself a hero.



PANDARUS AIMING AN ARROW AT MENELAUS.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DEEDS OF DIOMED.

THE taunts of General Agamemnon roused Diomed to show what he could do. Leaping from his car, he hurried to the scene of action. He was second only to Achilles in boldness and dash, and before him in prudence. He also eclipsed the heavy Ajax in dexterity and sprightliness. The reproaches of Agamemnon set the soul of this hero on fire, and his deeds blazed forth like a meteor in the sky. He first slew one of the sons of a wealthy priest of Vulcan, the other son escaping a like fate only by flight. Diomed went raging on, and all the Trojans retired before his dreadful sword.

Pandarus, who had broken the truce by wounding Menelaus, now strove to stem the furious onslaught of Diomed by letting fly a gray-goose shaft at him. The arrow pierced his shoulder, and his brazen armor was crimsoned with blood. The archer raised a shout of triumph, thinking he had killed Diomed, but he shouted too soon. The wounded man retired behind his chariot, and with the help of Sthenelus, plucked the arrow from his body. With a short prayer for help, the hero resumed the attack, and with tenfold ardor. Several young warriors were now slain by him; among them, two of Priam's sons, who were savagely torn from the chariot in which they rode side by side.

This disaster greatly afflicted Æneas, the most pious of Priam's children. He entreated Pandarus, as the best archer the Trojans had, to aim another arrow at Diomed, who was doing such harm.

Pandarus would not, however; he was in a pet because his unrivalled skill had failed him twice, and he swore he would go home and break his bow, and feed the fire with it. Æneas calmed his petulance, and invited him to ride in his chariot against Diomed.

"You shall either fight," said he, "or drive the famous horses."

Pandarus refused the reins, but ascended the chariot, and it went thundering on against the Greek.

Sthenelus warned him of its approach, and advised him to get into his own car, but the hero would not. When the chariot of Æneas was near enough, Pandarus hurled his spear at Diomed. It pierced his shield, and penetrated his coat of armor.

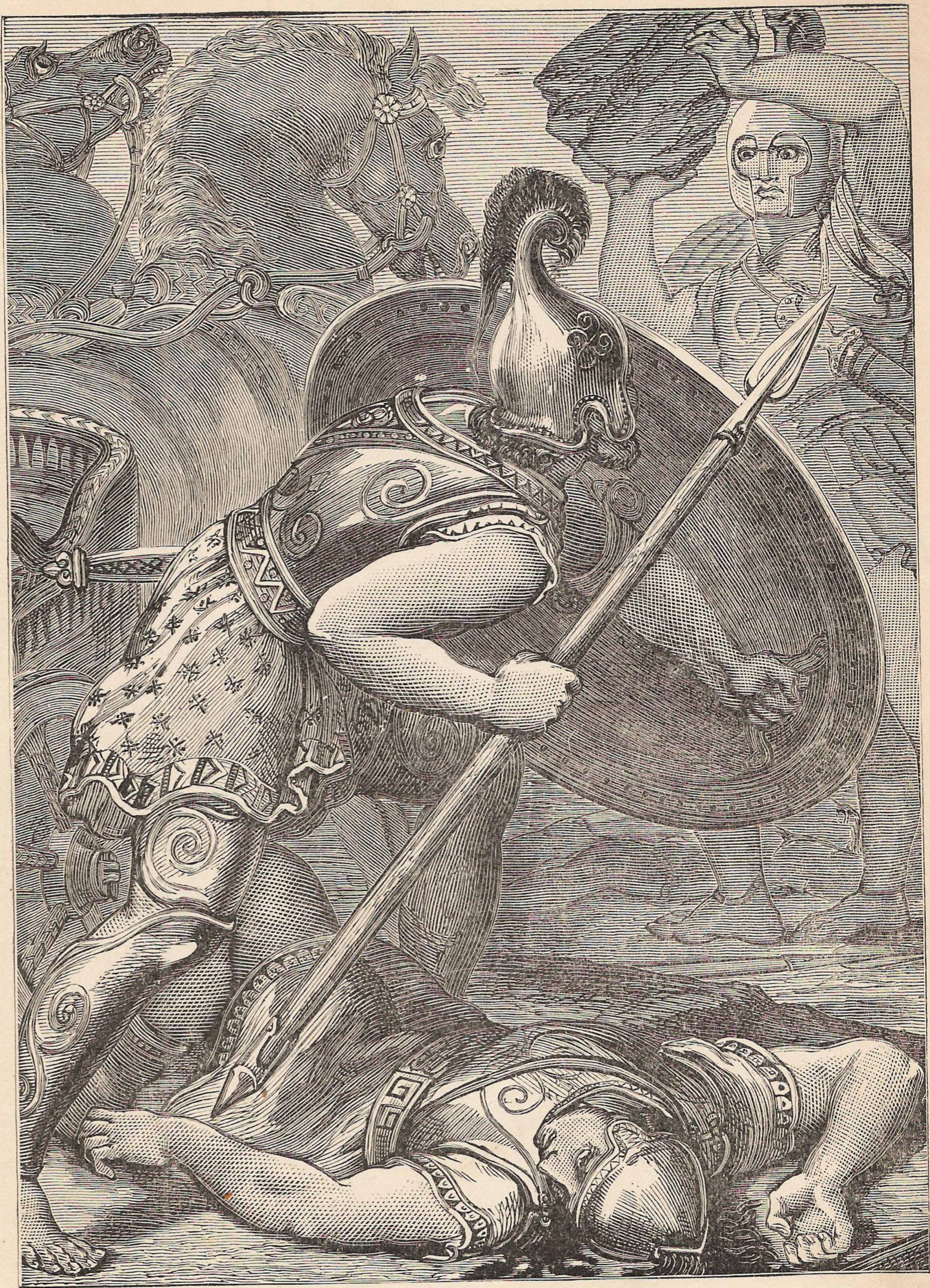
"The pride of Greece is dead!" shouted Pandarus. They were his last words.

"Mistaken boaster!" cried Diomed, as he hurled his javelin back. It struck Pandarus on the face, between his eyeball and nostril, and the point came out at the chin. And so Pandarus died. Æneas shielded his fallen friend, and drove away the Greeks, who longed to despoil the body. Then Diomed, stooping down, picked up a huge stone, which he hurled at Æneas. It lighted on his hip, and hurt him sorely; and now, as Paris had been hidden in a cloud, so was Æneas. Unseen hands conveyed him to the temple of Pergamus, where he was healed; but his chariot and his unrivalled horses became the property of Diomed.

The fall of Pandarus, the defeat of Æneas, and the evident terror of the Trojans, moved Sarpedon, one of their allies, to reproach Hector.

"Haste, warrior! haste!" cried he; "arouse your friends, or the towers of Troy must fall!"

At these words Hector leaped from his car and strove to revive the flagging ardor of the Trojans. His words were greatly assisted by the reappearance of Æneas, who seemed none the worse for the blow.



ÆNEAS DEFENDING THE BODY OF PANDARUS FROM DIOMED.

These signs of reviving courage did not escape Agamemnon. Shouting out a few calm words of encouragement, he launched his spear at Æneas' friend Deicoon, while Æneas replied by killing two Greeks. The Trojan then retired from an unequal contest with Menelaus and the son of Nestor, who bore down on him. The two Greeks thereupon wreaked their vengeance on Pylæmenes and his charioteer; and Nestor's son, leaping into the empty car, drove away with it, and added it to his prizes.

All this stirred Hector; and his whole appearance now became so dreadful that even Diomed was afraid, and advised a retreat. And so the Greeks retired, with their faces to the foe, doing meanwhile many deeds of prowess. The best and bravest of them surrounded Diomed, faint yet from his wound; and the goddess Juno, a great friend of the Greeks, imitating the voice of Stentor (who acted as a trumpeter), strove to arrest their retreating steps. Minerva also urged Diomed to fear no one, not even the god of war himself. She pushed him into his chariot and took the reins herself; and thus assisted, Diomed pierced Mars, who was at Hector's side. The wounded deity bellowed so loudly that all the Greeks and Trojans trembled when they heard it.

CHAPTER V.

DIOMED AND GLAUCUS BECOME FRIENDS.

WE have seen how great a soldier the Greek Diomed was, — one of the first of heroes then living, inferior to Achilles only. With his help, and that of Ajax (another mighty man of valor), the Greeks now drove the Trojans before them, and the famous streams, Scamander and Simois, ran crimson with blood. Each Greek chieftain slew some one famous either for size, wealth, or manly beauty. The fate of Adrastus deserves a brief notice. His horse took fright and ran away; and the chariot in which he rode was dashed violently against a tree, and became a wreck, and he was thrown out upon his face. Menelaus, the King of Sparta, went up to him and was about to thrust him through with a spear, when Adrastus piteously entreated the Greek to spare him on account of his youth. "If you will save my life," cried he, "my father will give you a large sum of money." Menelaus seemed inclined to show mercy, but his sterner brother, Agamemnon, coming up at that instant, urged him on no account to spare an enemy's life; and Menelaus, heeding his advice, drove his spear through the breastbone of Adrastus, and then, putting his foot on the body of his victim, drew out the blood-stained point.

A famous Trojan prophet, who had anxiously watched the events of the war, stole out about this time to Hector, and advised him to retire into the city and seek the mighty aid of the goddess



DIOMED GIVING WELCOME TO GLAUCUS.

Minerva by means of prayer and offerings. Hector at once obeyed, having first inspired his soldiers by a warlike speech to acquit themselves like men. His departure seemed to quiet the furious waves of battle, and all the fighting men were no doubt glad of a little rest after their late efforts.

It was now that Diomed found time to speak to a strange warrior, whom he had been admiring. He asked him who he was, and whether he was not some god in man's shape. "If thou art not a god," said the fire-eating Diomed, "I am willing to fight with thee, and give thy flesh to the crows if I can!" The stranger replied to the question by telling his own story. His name, he said, was Glaucus, and he was the grandson of that Bellerophon whose fame had filled the earth. His grandsire, Bellerophon, mounted on the winged horse Pegasus, had killed the Chimæra, — a monster with a lion's head and a dragon's tail.

Some think this Pegasus was in reality merely a ship, whose sails were its wings, while the Chimæra was a pirate-ship, with the figure of a lion on the prow and a dragon on the poop.

When Diomed had heard who the hero was, he at once sheathed his spear in the earth, and looking kindly upon Glaucus, bade him welcome to his embraces. "Thy grandsire," said he, "was a guest of mine for twenty days, and he left in our old family mansion a golden goblet, while my grandfather gave him in return a splendid belt. Let us, then, be friends; and if we are spared, we will exchange visits in happier days. There are plenty of Trojans yonder for my spear, without its point being levelled at thee; and thou wilt find enough Greeks to fight without fighting me. Let us, at least, be friends, whoever else may be enemies."

Glaucus answered this kind speech by alighting, and shaking Diomed by the hand. They then exchanged their arms; but the arms of Glaucus were more than ten times the value of Diomed's arms. The former were of gold, the latter of brass; the former

were divinely wrought, the latter were of a common, ungraceful shape.

Let us hope these valiant men lived to meet at Argos and in Lycia, after the bloody drama of Troy had been acted to the end. It is pleasant to see old friendship turning enemies into friends. May we all be as ready to find a reason for peace and love as Diomed and Glaucus!

CHAPTER VI.

HECTOR AND ANDROMACHE.

WE have seen how the prophet of Troy warned Hector to sheathe his sword awhile, and try the power of prayer, and how that hero at once obeyed the good man's advice and repaired to the city. Just within the Scæan Gate there was a pleasant spot, shaded by old beech-trees. Here Hector found a large gathering of married women and maidens, all anxious to hear tidings of the war outside. He did not say much, as time was pressing; but he bade them all form a procession and go to prayer in Minerva's temple. Hector then hastened to the palace, where he met Hecuba, his mother, who wished him to refresh himself with wine. He, however, put the cup from him with words about the evils of strong drink,—words that would have gladdened the heart of a teetotaler. He then, with a soldier's decision, bade his mother go at once and burn incense in Minerva's temple, and offer her rich gifts, while he would go and stir up his soft brother Paris to do something for the good of his country.

Theano, the priestess, was ready to open the doors of Minerva's temple, and to offer up with prayer the shining veil (bright as the morning star) which Hector's mother, Queen Hecuba, had chosen as her offering. The priestess asked that Diomed's spear might be broken, and he be slain in battle.

Meanwhile Hector went to upbraid his brother Paris, whom he found looking idly on while Helen and her women brightened his armor.

"Ungrateful man!" said Hector. "Is it not for thee the soldier bleeds and his widow weeps? Ought not thou to share the toils thou hast brought upon Troy?"

"Thy words are just," replied Paris; "but do not blame me. I am preparing, thou seest, for the conflict."

"Brother," sighed Helen, "if thou wilt let me call thee by so dear a name, I wish I had died the day I was born, or had known at least a braver spouse than Paris. But wilt thou not rest awhile here after thy great labors?"

Hector said he could not rest, for he was urgently needed in the field. He must go and see his wife and child for a minute or two, and then leave them, perhaps forever. He then went to his own home, but his wife, Andromache, was not there. She was standing on the tower watching the fight below, and by her side was a nurse holding her child, Astyanax.

When the husband and wife met, the tears were trembling in her eye, and she blamed him for loving danger more than he loved his wife and child.

She felt sure Hector would fall, but she hoped she would die before him. She told of her bygone sorrows,—how the sword had slain her father and her seven brave brothers, and how her mother had died of a broken heart. "Yet," continued she, looking tenderly at Hector, "thou art father, mother, and brethren, all in one; and all I have lost, I shall lose again if Hector falls. But hear, my dear husband, what I advise. See yonder, where the wild fig-trees touch the wall of Troy. There take thy stand, and defend that important post. Let others go out and fight in the field, but Hector should stay inside and guard the city."

Hector in reply said he would take care that the spot should be guarded, but he must not quit the field, as his wife advised. He then drew a picture of the fall of Troy, and he said nothing moved him so much as the griefs he feared his dear wife might have to



HECTOR WITH HIS FAMILY.

suffer; and he wished that he might lie cold in death, so as neither to hear her sigh nor see her weep.

The warrior then stretched out his arms to embrace his little one. The child, alarmed by the shining helmet and its waving plumes, shrank from his father, who, with a smile, took off his headpiece and laid it on the ground. He then took the sweet child in his strong arms and kissed him, and prayed the gods to protect him and make him another Hector,—yea, a better than Hector, one who would bring joy and gladness to his mother's heart.

He then restored Astyanax to his mother, who clasped her darling to her bosom and quieted his alarms. Her tears now fell fast; and Hector dried them as best he could, and did all that in him lay to comfort her. "The hour of our fate is fixed," said he, "and we cannot escape it, be we cowards or be we brave men. But I must away; do thou, Andromache, go home, and I will to the field of battle."

And so they parted,—the weeping wife to her palace, where she nursed her woe; and the hero to his warlike toil, so soon to end with his death.

As Hector drew near the gate, he met Paris, in gleaming armor; and the brothers passed together through it, and out into the sea of passion which was soon about to rage again below the city towers.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FATAL GIFTS.

WHEN Hector was seen once more in the field, the battle began again in good earnest; and even Paris dented a few Greek helmets. A sort of panic set in among them; and Minerva, a great friend of the Greeks, thought how best she could turn the tide of war. So she moved Helenus, the Trojan priest, to persuade Hector to dare the best of the Greeks to a mortal combat. This caused the battle to cease awhile; for Hector trusted in Helenus, and believed the advice was good. He perhaps thought he might vanquish and slay some great Greek hero. This was not promised him, but he was told he should not himself die in the duel.

"Choose your best man," cried Hector to the Greeks, "and let us fight together. If I fall, he shall have these arms; but let my body be carried to Troy, and burned there. If he falls, let his arms be mine, and hung up in Apollo's temple; and let his body have this epitaph, 'Here lies a brave Greek, slain by Hector.'"

The Greeks were for a time surprised and silent. No one was willing to meet Hector in mortal combat; Menelaus at length came to the rescue of the nation's honor, saying, —

"I will dare this danger if no one else will." He put on his blue armor, and would have perished in it, — for he was no match for Hector, — but his brother, Agamemnon, would not allow him to go.

"Brother," said he, "you cannot cope with Hector. Even Achilles dares hardly fight with him. Be still, and some one will surely be found to contend with this boastful Trojan."



AJAX HURLED A LARGE STONE AT HECTOR'S SHIELD AND BROUGHT HIM TO HIS KNEES.

Old Nestor noticed the slowness of the Greeks to fight Hector, and he saw it with much sorrow. How he wished, said he, he was young again, that he might roll away the disgrace from his country. He then related aloud several of his own brave deeds; and his words so stirred the Greeks that no less than nine heroes offered to meet the great Trojan fighter. The names of the nine men were written on bits of wood or shells, and put in a helmet. After a brief prayer, Nestor shook the helmet, and one of the lots jumped out. It belonged to Ajax, perhaps the second best of the Greeks.

"I claim the lot," cried he, with joy. "Be it mine to conquer this Trojan chief! I was born in warlike Salamis, and I fear nobody."

While the Greeks prayed for success to rest on Ajax, he put on his bright steel armor, and looked every inch a warrior. Hector almost trembled when he saw the tremendous man draw near, behind his great shield of bull's hide and brass, and when he heard him bellow forth, —

"Come here, Hector, and feel the strength of my arm. Greece has sent thee a sample of her soldiers in me. But no more words; come, let us begin!"

"I am neither a boy nor a woman to be frightened by thee," retorted Hector; "in me is one born to combats, and skilful in all kinds of warfare."

Hector, having had the last word, took the first throw; his spear went through six of the bulls' hides composing the shield of Ajax, and lodged in the seventh. But the spear Ajax hurled back went clean through Hector's shield, and tore his corselet, without wounding his skin. Each drew the spear from his shield and made a second attack. Hector's spear this time was bent at the point; while that of Ajax went through Hector's shield, and wounded him in the neck.

Hector now picked up a large stone, and hurled it at his enemy's brazen shield, on which it loudly rang. Ajax replied with a jagged

piece of rock, which burst through Hector's shield and brought him to his knees. He recovered instantly; and then each hero, drawing his sword, brandished it in a glittering circle round his head. Before, however, they had time to deal a blow at each other, Idæus and Talthybius, the Trojan and Greek priests, went forward, and putting their rods of peace between the combatants, ordered them to stop fighting.

Ajax said if Hector wished the conflict to cease he was quite willing to agree, but as Hector gave the challenge, he was the one to ask for the fight to be ended. Whereupon Hector, after praising Ajax as the first of the Greeks, and saying they would meet again another day, requested that the combat might cease.

"But," said Hector, "let us exchange some gifts, that the world may say it was not hatred, but glory which made Ajax and Hector fight."

So saying, Hector offered to Ajax a beautiful sword, studded with stars; and Ajax, in return, presented him with a rich belt of purple. Then, as night was drawing nigh, each hero retired,—the one to the rejoicing Trojans, the other to a grand banquet held in his honor within the Greek lines. Little thought Hector, as he carried his belt home, that he would be dragged by it three times around the walls of Troy; and as little did Ajax foresee his own life-blood would dim the sheen of the starry sword which Hector had just given him!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE THUNDER-STORM.

NEXT day the fighting went on ; but there were storms of thunder and lightning, which alarmed the Greeks very much. For the black clouds seemed to burst right over their heads ; and most, even the braver ones, as Ajax and Agamemnon, retired, supposing the omnipotent Jove was against them. Nestor happened to be detained among the Trojans in the storm ; for Paris had wounded his horse in the head, and so maddened it that Nestor was obliged to cut the traces and leave his steed to its fate. Just then Hector came dashing on in his usual fashion, and Nestor would most certainly have perished, had not Diomed seen his danger and urged Ulysses to go with him to the old man's rescue ; but Ulysses would not hear, so Diomed had to go alone.

" Father," said he to Nestor, when he reached his side, " get up into my chariot, and we will yet do some damage to those Trojans."

Nestor complied, and took the reins, leaving his servants to do the best they could with his own chariot.

As Diomed and Nestor were carried swiftly along, the former hurled his spear at Hector's chariot. It missed Hector, but slew his servant, Eniopeus. Diomed, taking advantage of the confusion caused by this, dashed on, driving the Trojans before him like a flock of frightened sheep. Suddenly, however, a thunder-bolt fell at his horses' feet, and a horrible smell of sulphur nearly choked them. The noble animals dropped, and old Nestor was greatly alarmed. He felt that the heavens were fighting that day against the Greeks ; and he implored Diomed to retire, and fight no longer against the gods.

"I will, if you desire it, O reverend prince!" replied Diomed.
"But what grief will it be if haughty Hector boasts he made me flee?"

"Well," answered the wise old man, "but who would believe him if he did?"

So saying, he turned the chariot, and the steeds of Tros galloped away, the Trojans pursuing, and Hector loudly reviling. Hector encouraged his own horses in the pursuit. He promised them corn steeped in wine if they would overtake the famous steeds, once the property of Æneas, and now, alas, Diomed's!

"If we could but strip old Nestor of his golden shield, and Diomed of his costly cuirass, we might see the Greek ships on fire to-night."

It was indeed a terrible moment for the Greeks; and several of their leaders seem to have given up all for lost. Agamemnon now showed, by his piety and presence of mind, that he was worthy of the exalted post he filled. Lifting up his purple robe as a banner, he made a speech and a prayer; and Jove answered him by a happy omen. An eagle, with a fawn in his talons, hovered high over the awe-struck host; and a sudden revival of courage took place at once. Diomed was the first to wheel round and face the exulting foe. His boldness kindled bravery in others, and all the great Greek leaders rushed hastily to the battle. Among them was an archer named Teucer, who, skilfully hiding himself behind the tower-like shield of Ajax, laid low with his bitter arrows many a stout Trojan. His ninth arrow he aimed at Hector. It missed him, but killed his chariot-driver. Stung with this, Hector hurled a stone at Teucer. It smote him just where the neck is joined to the body; and the skilful archer was borne away, groaning with anguish. This mischance caused the Greeks once more to retire, but a good stand was made close to the ships.

And now came welcome night, as night ever will, at its proper hour. It was as great a blessing to the Greeks as to the hard-fighting English on the blood-stained slope of Mont St. Jean, when Wellington exclaimed, "Would to God night or Blucher were here!"



DIOMED AND NESTOR IN THE STORM.

CHAPTER IX.

OLD NESTOR'S ADVICE.

THE Greeks had had a terrible day of it, and were quite downhearted. Even Agamemnon, at a council of war, said he thought as Jove was fighting for the Trojans, it would be better for the Greeks to go home at once. But Diomed plainly told Agamemnon that he was giving cowardly advice.

"The gods have made thee only half a king," said he. "They gave thee a wide kingdom, but they did not give thee a brave soul. Go home, if thou wilt, — thy ships are nearest the open sea; but we will remain till Troy is taken, — at least I will, if every other Greek forsakes me."

There was a murmur of applause at these manly words; and old Nestor, who had so lately benefited by Diomed's bravery in the field, rose up to commend it in the council.

"Greece approves thy words, my son. Young as thou art, almost too young to be a son of mine, thou canst yet blame even kings when they need it. Let me advise something as well, O king! Order the young and bold to guard the trench; but do thou call the elders together for advice. See how near those Trojan watch-fires are to our ships! The crisis is at hand, and to-morrow must see Troy in flames, or Greece vanquished."

No sooner said than done. Seven hundred spears went forth to guard the trench and wall; and Agamemnon invited a large party to his tent, where, after a brief repast, Nestor spoke again, and advised the king to try to appease the wrath of Achilles. He said, —

"Thou didst wrong that hero by forcing the damsel from his tent; now go, and move him with prayers and gifts to come and help us."

"What thou hast said is reasonable," replied Agamemnon. "I know the worth of Achilles; and if I can persuade him to fight again for us, I will gladly give him large presents, — gold, horses, slaves. And if Troy falls, he shall lade his ships with what he likes. And if he chooses to wed any of my daughters, glad shall I be to own him as my son-in-law, and he shall have seven cities with the bride as her dower."

Nestor said the offer was worthy of a king, and he then named five men to go to the tent of Achilles. Phœnix was to be the spokesman, and Ajax and Ulysses of the party.

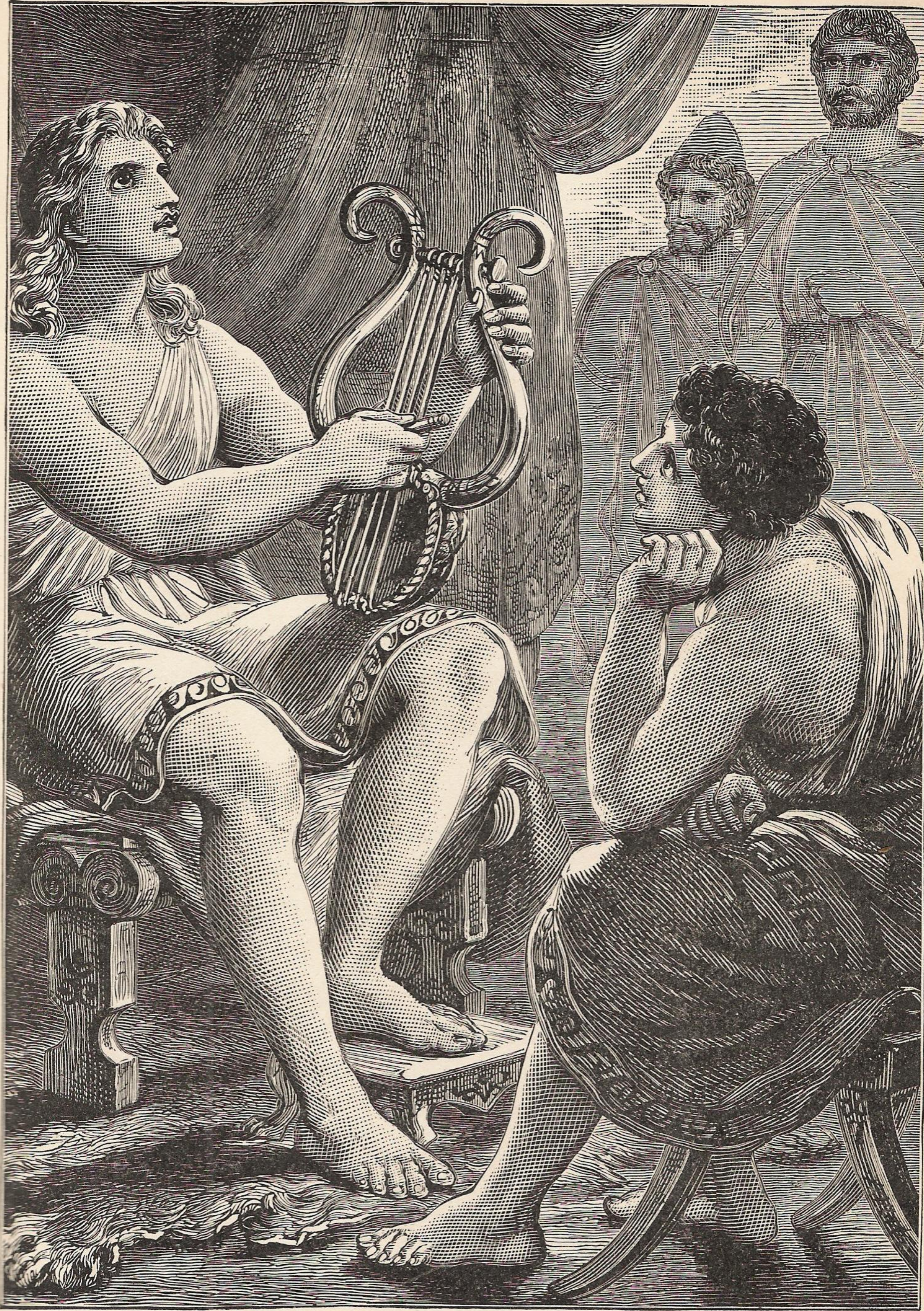
They found Achilles amusing himself with his harp, and attended by his dear friend Patroclus. When they saw the visitors, he stopped playing, and bade them welcome. Patroclus prepared a repast, and then Ulysses began to explain the purpose of their visit. Said he, —

"Greece is on the brink of ruin, and thou alone canst save her. The tents of the Trojans cast their shadow on our wall. Let but to-morrow's sun arise, and the furious Hector may fire our ships. Shall it be so? Return, Achilles, and save thy brothers in arms! Check thine anger, and be truly brave!"

Ulysses then recounted the gifts offered by the king. Achilles replied that his mind was not to be changed.

"I have borne much in the cause of thankless Greece, and what have I gained? The wealth I have won has all been laid at Agamemnon's feet. And why does he want *me*? Has he not walls and trenches? Will *they* not keep out one Hector? No, I decline all terms; I hate his gifts! Though he offered me all he had, I would refuse it. Go back, then! digest my message as you may; my mind is made up. But Phœnix shall remain with me to-night, and I will take him in my ship to Phthia, where he shall die in peace."

Old Phœnix then essayed to move Achilles.



ACHILLES AMUSING HIMSELF WITH HIS HARP.

"Wilt thou thus retire?" implored he. He then reminded Achilles of the services he had done him when he was a little boy. He pointed out the sad results of unabated anger, and he besought him to draw his conquering sword, and be forever an object of worship to the Greeks.

But he might as well have spoken to a stone, and got a blunt refusal; at which Ajax, as bluntly, said, —

"Let us go; why do we waste our time here? His iron heart retains its stubborn purpose, and gifts can conquer every soul but his. But I would thou wert of a better mind, Achilles, and be gracious to those who prize thy courage."

"Thou speakest well, Ajax; but when I think of Agamemnon, my soul is on fire. Go back, and say I mean to fight no more, unless the ships are in flames. In that case Hector shall feel the weight of my hand." And so the princes returned, leaving Phoenix with Achilles.

"What success have you had?" was the first question asked by Agamemnon.

"His wrath is fixed, O king! He scorns thy proposals. Tomorrow morning he intends to sail, and to take Phoenix with him."

A sorrowful silence fell on all; but the brave Diomed cried out, —

"Why need we send gifts to that proud man? Let him go or stay; it matters not to us! What we can do, we will do. Come, let us go to supper, and strengthen ourselves for the morrow!"

It was brave and good advice, and was received with shouts of applause.

CHAPTER X.

THE NIGHT ADVENTURE OF ULYSSES AND DIOMED.

BUT Agamemnon was not happy. He felt the weight of his crown; a thousand cares darkened his spirit. He could not sleep; so he left his bed, and dressed himself. He then went to arouse his brother Menelaus, but he found him already up. He begged him to go and arouse Ajax, while he would call Nestor.

The king found old Nestor asleep in his black ship, and awoke him, and told him how he could not sleep, being too fearful of a Trojan night-attack.

"Be not cast down," replied Nestor. "Trust the powers above. I am ready to obey thy wishes, and I will go and arouse thy brother, who ought to be up and stirring."

"He was up long ago," replied the king, ever ready to defend his brother.

They then awoke Ulysses and Diomed. The first was in his tent; the second lay sleeping in full armor outside, with his bossy shield for a pillow. Around him lay his brave comrades; and their spears, stuck upright, formed a little wood. Nestor shook Diomed with his foot, and he awoke.

"There is no time to be lost, Diomed; despair surrounds our host."

The hero arose, and went with Nestor to the council of the chiefs. After some time the old man said, —

"Is there one among us brave enough to go to the Trojan camp to learn what they mean to do?"

"I am ready to do so," answered Diomed; "but I should be glad to have a comrade, for one man helps another."

Plenty of heroes were ready to accompany Diomed, but he chose Ulysses, saying, "With the aid of such wisdom as his I would not mind going through fire."

Thrasymedes gave Diomed a shield, and Meriones offered Ulysses a well-proved helmet, formed like the head of a boar with tusks; and they then went on their dangerous adventure.

As they left the lines, they heard a heron, and Ulysses took it as a good omen, and prayed some good deed might grace their arms. Diomed did the same. The way was dreary enough. They stumbled every minute over a dead body; their feet were red with blood.

Now, it so happened that the Trojans had done the same as the Greeks, and Hector had offered a reward to any one bold enough to go into the Greek camp and spy out their doings.

A certain man, named Dolon, was tempted by the offer, — a chariot and horses, — and he said if Hector would swear to give him the chariot of Achilles (when it was captured), he would go even to the king's tent, and find out all the counsels of the Greeks.

Hector swore it, and Dolon, having armed himself, went on his way. His footsteps were soon heard by the quick ears of Ulysses, who said to Diomed, —

"Here is a spy, or one who is come to strip the slain. Let him pass us, and then we will turn and follow him."

So Ulysses and Diomed hid themselves behind some dead bodies, and let Dolon pass. When he had got a little way on, they followed him until he had nearly reached the Greek sentinels. Then Diomed shouted out, —

"Stop, or I will throw my spear at thee!" So saying, he hurled it over Dolon's shoulder, and it fixed itself in the earth. The wretched Dolon now was sorry he had left the Trojan camp. He piteously

entreated the Greeks to spare him, offering a large ransom for his life.

"What art thou doing here?" asked Ulysses. "Art thou a spy, or a robber of the dead?"

Dolon told his tale truthfully.

"Thou didst aim boldly," replied Ulysses. "Achilles himself can hardly manage his own horses. But tell us truly, where lies Hector to-night? And where are the princes? And what are they going to do?"

"Hector is holding a council at the monument of Ilus," answered Dolon. He then went on to describe the position of the Trojans and their allies, dwelling much on a certain Rhesus and his beautiful snow-white horses. Dolon hoped thus to escape death; but his hope was vain.

"Dost thou think we shall spare thy life," said the stern Diomed, "to spy out our secrets again? No; thou shalt die." And with that he cut off Dolon's head, and the armor of the unhappy man was hung up on a tamarisk-tree and dedicated to Minerva.

Having heard so much about Rhesus and his snow-white horses, the Greeks resolved to make a dash and seize them. When they reached the Thracian encampment, deep sleep had fallen on the host. They were newly come, and weary with travel. As a lion invades the fold, and worries the sheep, so did the grim Diomed slay twelve sleeping Thracians; while Ulysses, following in his steps, drew the dead and dying aside, that a road might be made for the horses and chariot. Having at length killed Rhesus himself, they mounted the chariot; and Ulysses, using his bow and string as a whip, urged the horses onward to the Grecian camp.

When Hippocoon, the friend of Rhesus, awoke, how great was his agony! "Rhesus! Rhesus!" he cried; but none answered. His cries brought the Trojans to his side in crowds, and much they wondered at the swift and sudden fate which had fallen on their allies.



ULYSSES URGING ON THE HORSES OF RHESUS.

As the chariot of Rhesus, with the two Greeks in it, drew near to the tamarisk, Ulysses reined in the horses, and Diomed transferred the spoils of the wretched Dolon from the tree to the carriage.

Nestor was anxiously expecting them. He was half afraid that they never would return; and great was his joy when they appeared, safe and sound, and with the beautiful horses to boot.

"Where did these fair steeds come from?" asked he. "I never saw nobler horses before. Did some god give them to you?"

"They are Thracian horses," replied Ulysses. "Diomed slew the king and twelve of his guards. These other spoils belonged to a wretch named Dolon, whom Hector sent to spy out our camp secrets."

The steeds were placed in Diomed's stable, and Dolon's armor was laid on the stern of a ship belonging to Ulysses, as a trophy to Minerva.

A bath in the sea, and a good breakfast afterward, rewarded the adventurers, and fitted them for yet further exertions against Hector and his men.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BATTLE GOES AGAINST THE GREEKS.

ON the plains of Troy was a monument erected to the memory of a king named Ilus, and near this monument we shall see Agamemnon doing great deeds. Hitherto he has not done much in the fight; but now, as the Greeks are in a bad way and Achilles will not help them, Agamemnon thinks he ought to play the part of chief hero.

So having put on the various parts of his bright armor, and fastened them with silver buckles, and taken up his wonderful shield, he hurried to the fight.

On a rising ground near the monument the Trojan lines were posted. After some time Agamemnon began to deal death about him. Bienor and his squire, two of Priam's sons, and several other warriors were slain by him. The Trojan host, in great alarm, retired from the tomb of Ilus, and fled toward the city by the wild fig-tree, their enemy pursuing them as far as the Scaean Gate.

Hector, cheered by a message from Jove, rallied his frightened troops; and Agamemnon received a wound in the arm, which drove him off the field. These two events changed the fortunes of the day; and the Trojans were again victorious, and the Greeks beaten, until Ulysses and Diomed, hurrying to the front together, checked the march of Hector. But Diomed was not in his usual spirits; he felt he was fighting against fate. He threw his spear, however, at Hector, and stunned him. Thanks to his helmet (a gift of Apollo),



PARIS SHOOTING HIS ARROW AT DIOMED.

Hector, except for a little giddiness, was none the worse, though he had to retire, Diomed shouting scornfully after him.

Meanwhile the dandy Paris, curled and scented, stood behind the monument of Ilus, and aimed his arrows as he liked. Seeing Diomed laughing at Hector's misfortune, he shot him in the foot, as he stooped to pick up the crest of one of his victims.

"He bleeds! Diomed bleeds!" So shouted Paris in triumph. "I wish the arrow had gone through his heart instead of his foot!"

Diomed answered Paris in the bitterest scorn.

"Thou woman-warrior, with thy curls," said he, "thou hast done only what a boy or a woman might do. Do not boast; for a coward's weapon cannot harm a brave man. But mind this dart of mine; for certain death is on its point."

Ulysses now came up, and plucked out the arrow. The red blood flowed fast, and the pain increased. Diomed was glad to retire, leaving Ulysses alone. That wise hero did his best; but what can the bravest man do against such odds? His side was at length laid open by the spear of Socus, and Ulysses had to retire, calling loudly for help.

Menelaus heard the cry; and he said to Ajax, —

"I am sure I hear Ulysses calling for help. Let us go to him at once."

They found him in sore distress, like some noble stag among mountain wolves; but the bulky form of Ajax and his tower-like shield alarmed the Trojan crew, several of whom had to bite the dust. While Ajax fought, Ulysses was rescued, placed on his car, and carried away to a safe place.

Meanwhile Hector was opposed by old Nestor and Idomeneus (one of the nine chief Greek heroes), and Paris continued shooting arrows from behind the monument. Among those whom he shot was Machaon, the chief surgeon in the Greek army. He was wounded in the shoulder. Nestor bade Idomeneus carry Machaon

to the ships, as the doctor's life was very valuable. Thus the Greek leaders were nearly all removed from the battle-field. Ajax, however, remained there; but when Hector came up, terrible and grim, he too withdrew, like a lion slowly retiring from dogs and men, a crowd following and baiting him, and every now and then tasting the sharpness of his spear. As he stooped to despoil Apisaon, Paris managed to transfix his thigh. Ajax roared loudly for help, and he was with some difficulty rescued from death.

All this time Achilles had been watching the battle from his ship. He was much interested in Machaon's accident, and he sent his friend Patroclus to ask whom it was Paris had wounded.

Patroclus went to Nestor's tent, and said Achilles wished to know whom he had sent home wounded. Nestor was glad to find Achilles had some feeling.

"Can the sorrows of the Greeks excite his pity?" asked he. "Tell him not Machaon alone, but Ulysses, Agamemnon, and Diomed are sorely wounded. But what cares he? He looks on calmly, and enjoys our misery. I wish I were young again, as when I first fought a battle."

Old Nestor then hinted that some people thought Achilles shut himself up in his tent to save his skin. If, however, Patroclus could but put on the arms of Achilles, Troy might yet tremble, and the Greeks breathe freely again.

The heart of Patroclus was touched. As he returned to the tent of Achilles, he met the wounded Eurypylus in great agony.

"Greece is no more!" groaned he. "The best of her sons are hurt, and her great surgeon needs the help he has so often given to others."

Patroclus helped Eurypylus to his tent, cut the arrow-head from the wound, and applied to it a healing balm.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CONFLICT AT THE WALL.

WHILE Patroclus was doctoring his friend, many men were being slain on either side, but yet the Greeks had the worst of it. They were close to their ships, trembling at Hector's approach. There was a ditch, however, and other defences, between that hero and the Greek camp. The ditch was wide and deep, and the bottom bristled with sharpened stakes.

The Trojans halted at the edge of the ditch, and Polydamas advised Hector not to run rashly on certain dangers.

"If we are able to leap across, and they turn on us, we may be ruined. My advice is, to retire a little, leave our chariots, and make the attack on foot, with Hector at our head."

This seemed good advice; and the chariots being led to the rear, the Trojans divided themselves into five bands, and prepared to attack the wall in as many places.

One man, named Asius, would not leave his chariot, but drove his horses toward a gate at the left. Two gigantic warders, however, kept the gate, and raised about them a heap of dead. As Asius was striving to enter, an eagle was seen in the air, holding a serpent. The serpent, writhing in the eagle's talons, stung it in the neck, so that the bird dropped the creature among the terrified soldiers, and filled the air with its cries.

"We are that eagle," said Polydamas. "As he was obliged to let the serpent go, so must we leave hold of our prey."

But Hector was of another mind. "The brave man," said he, "does not guide his mind by every wandering bird he sees; he needs no omen but the cause of his country. Be a slave if you like; but do not poison our soldiers with your fears, if you value your life!"

Then Hector rushed furiously toward the wall; and a most desperate struggle began. The two Ajaxes flew from place to place, urging every Greek to sally from the trenches. But that could not be done yet. They could scarce hold their own. For some time, therefore, no advantage was gained on either side; but at length a hero of the Trojans, named Sarpedon, effected an important change.

"Why should I be a king in dignity," asked he of his friend Glaucus, "if I am not able to do kingly acts? Die we all must at last. We must pay the debt of nature when our time comes. Why should we not give our lives to fame?"

This speech was heard joyfully, and Sarpedon moved on to the wall, followed by a multitude. A Greek, named Menestheus, saw the onset, and sent Thoos to call to the threatened point some one to repel the attack. Thoos delivered his message, and Ajax, leaving the post where he was, went promptly to confront the royal Sarpedon. He lost no time in crushing to death Sarpedon's friend, Epicles, by hurling at him a huge fragment of rock. The famous Greek archer, Teucer, at the same moment disabled Sarpedon's other friend, Glaucus. Highly enraged at this double misfortune, Sarpedon rushed at the wall, and tugging at it, made a breach, through which he attempted to pass. Teucer aimed an arrow at him, and Ajax hurled his javelin at him. The former weapon stuck in Sarpedon's belt, and the latter pierced his shield, but no further damage was done. Looking round, Sarpedon saw his Lycian soldiers were falling back, whereupon he rallied them in stinging words to follow him through the deadly breach.



HECTOR AND POLYDAMAS.

The struggle was long and doubtful until Hector, at another point of the defences, burst open the folded gates of solid timber, strengthened with iron bars, by hurling at them a huge sharp-cornered stone. The Trojan hero rushed in, terrible and resistless, followed by many others; and the Greeks had to flee from their wall toward their ships, amid dreadful scenes of carnage and cries of anguish. And had not Neptune now assisted the Greeks, and revived the courage of the Ajaxes and other less mighty heroes, such as Idomeneus and Menelaus, the Greek ships would have soon been in a blaze.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DEATH OF PATROCLUS.

WE left the Greeks in a bad way. They were driven nearly to their ships; their best soldiers would not fight; their next best warriors were nearly all wounded. Their hope seemed all to rest on Ajax, who, though slightly wounded, was equal to the occasion.

While Hector was rejoicing at his success, he was struck to the earth by a huge stone hurled at him by Ajax, and he had to be carried off. After a short period, however, Hector returned; and followed by his troops, he went through the broken wall, and attempted to fire the fleet.

"Bring the flames!" roared he, laying his hand on a ship; "bring the flames! The labor of ten years is ended!"

But it was no easy task to bring a lighted torch, for Ajax struck every one carrying a flame to the earth; and twelve of the boldest soon fell before his terrible iron mace. But Ajax felt his strength exhausted; and as Trojan after Trojan came up with fiery torches, a ship was soon in flames.

It was now that Patroclus, the friend of Achilles, went to that hero in tears.

"What is the matter, Patroclus?" asked his friend. "Tell me why thou weepest."

"I weep for Greece," replied Patroclus. "Every chief who might help her lies wounded, and thou showest no pity. Surely thou art not a man, but born of a rock in a stormy day. Come, let me put

on thine armor, and lead thy idle troops to battle. Thou art so dreaded that if the Trojans see even one in thy armor, they will retire."

Achilles agreed to the request. "Go, then," said he, "and save the ships. I hear the Trojan shouts of triumph. I see our ships on fire. It is time something should be done. It was not like this when Troy saw Achilles, and trembled. But," continued he, "remember Hector is mine. No one is to slay Hector but Achilles. Save the fleet; but do no more. Pursue not the enemy, lest evil befall thee."

It was high time. Ajax was worn out, and had to retire, and the Trojans were able to do their work of destruction unchecked.

So Patroclus armed himself, and yoked the famous horses to the chariot. Their names were Xanthus and Ballus; and a third, called Pedasus, ran in harness by their side.

Achilles himself aroused his grim soldiers, and exhorted them to be fierce and brave.

"There are the enemy! Grieve no longer at the idleness to which I have doomed you, but go and do the work ye love!"

Achilles then asked Jove to save the fleet and protect Patroclus. Half the prayer was granted. The ships were saved; but Patroclus never came back alive.

When the Trojans saw the well-known chariot of Achilles whirled up to the burning ship, and Achilles himself (as they thought) in the car, they fled, followed by Patroclus. A general advance of the Greeks also took place, and heaps of dead marked the course of the pseudo-Achilles.

It was now the amiable Sarpedon met his doom. He was mortified at the sudden change brought about by the arms of Achilles; and leaping from his chariot, he maimed the horse Pedasus, who fell, and checked the others. The driver cut the thongs which coupled Pedasus to the chariot, and the dying horse was left behind.

At this moment Sarpedon hurled his spear at Patroclus. It missed him, but the lance which Patroclus returned was aimed more surely. It struck Sarpedon on the breast, and made a mortal wound.

"Glaucus," said the dying hero, "be bold, and lead my troops. Do not let my arms adorn a Greek. Defend my body; conquer, or die."

The fury of battle raged fiercely about the body of Sarpedon. When the Greek Epigeus touched it, his head was smashed by a rock. Then Patroclus beat back the Trojans, and then Æneas, in turn, rallied them; but the end of it was that the Trojans had to leave Sarpedon's body, and the Greeks despoiled it of its armor.

Meanwhile Patroclus, blind to his coming fate, pursued the enemy too far. Hector retired even to the gates of Troy, wondering at the change which Achilles had wrought, when a solemn voice sounded in his ear, —

"Can it be Hector who forbears to fight? Turn again to thy field of fame, and wipe out thy disgrace in yon hero's blood!"

Hector obeyed. He found Patroclus on foot, with a spear in his left hand, and a stone in his right. With the latter weapon he killed Cebrión, a son of Priam, and then tried to rob the corpse of its armor. Hector, leaping from his car, seized Cebrión's head, and the two became the centre of another furious conflict. At length the Greeks prevailed once more, and Cebrión's body and splendid arms were theirs.

Then Patroclus made his last furious onset. In the midst of it he received a blow from an unseen hand; his helmet was dashed to the ground, his spear broken to shivers, his shield slipped from his grasp; and it was known in a moment that he was not Achilles. He seemed like one stricken with palsy. In this bewildered state he was wounded by Euphorbus, and as he turned to retire, Hector ran him through the body.



THE DEATH OF PATROCLUS.

"Lie there, Patroclus!" said Hector. "Thou shalt be vulture's meat. Thine own Achilles cannot help thee."

"It is Heaven's will," murmured the dying man. "Heaven disarmed me; Apollo struck me; Euphorbus wounded me. Thou hast done but the meanest part. Vain boaster! thou shalt soon be as I. I see thee fall, and by the hand of Achilles."

"Who knows the will of Heaven?" mused Hector, as he looked down upon the dead man. "Why may not Achilles fall by my hand, as well as Hector by his?"

Automedon drove the empty chariot away, and again the roar of battle arose over the body of the slain man.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FIGHT AROUND THE BODY OF PATROCLUS.

IT was Menelaus who chiefly distinguished himself in the defence of Patroclus' body

"My hand laid him low," cried Euphorbus; "wherefore, leave me the spoils of war or prepare for death."

Menelaus replied, —

"I have but lately slain thy brother; and if thou stayest here, I will slay *thee*."

Euphorbus answered with fierce words, and then hurled his lance at the Greek. It fell harmless from his shield; but the dart of Menelaus, coming swiftly back, laid Euphorbus in the dust.

Hector saw what had happened, and shouted in a voice of thunder. Menelaus could not cope with Hector; so he retired until he met Ajax.

"Haste, Ajax," said he, "and defend the body of Patroclus. He lies, I fear, despoiled by this time, and Hector rejoices. Let us carry off the body at least."

It was just time; for when Ajax reached the place, Hector had begun to drag away the rifled corpse. Seeing Ajax, Hector retired, not caring to fight him just now; and the stalwart Greek stood and sheltered the dead Patroclus with his mighty shield.

Glaucus taunted Hector with his retreat.

"Thou didst leave Sarpedon, who died for Troy, to feast dogs and vultures! Could we but drag yon body, which Ajax covers, to our

walls, we might obtain Sarpedon's corpse in exchange for Patroclus. But thou art afraid of Ajax."

"Afraid of Ajax! Not I!" replied Hector, astonished. "Come and see if I am afraid." Then, lifting up his voice, he shouted, "Trojans and allies, be men, and remember your glory! I will put on the arms of Achilles, and do ye follow me."

So saying, he clad himself with the immortal armor, and Jove beheld him with pity.

"Thou shalt have one day of glory, unhappy man! and no more."

Every word Hector now spoke seemed to kindle the courage of the Trojans.

"Whoever shall drag Patroclus to Troy," shouted he, "shall share the honor and the spoil with me."

Ajax noticed that a storm was brewing, and he said to Menelaus, —

"Look what a tempest is bearing down upon us! Greeks, chiefs, princes! Come! Come and save Patroclus from the dogs of Troy!"

The other Ajax heard; so did Idomeneus and Meriones; and these five, with their shields, made a ring about the body. But being beaten off, a Trojan, named Hippothous, contrived to fasten thongs to the dead man's ankles, and thus to drag his body away. As he was doing this, the lance of Ajax tumbled him dead upon his victim. Then flew Hector's javelin at Ajax. It missed him, but killed Schedius, the noble and brave. Ajax replied by slaying another of the Trojans. The latter were daunted, and would have retired, had not Æneas come to the rescue, and shamed Hector into a fresh attempt. And now another most terrible battle went on over the body of Patroclus. Heaps of Greeks and Trojans fell, and all around the mass of struggling men was spread a dismal gloom.

Meanwhile, the steeds of Achilles stood sorrowing, as if they knew that something was wrong. Their heads hung down; their long manes trailed on the dust. These were not ordinary horses. Jove looked down on them, and bade them move; they obeyed. Meeting a

Greek named Alcimedon, their driver got down; and Alcimedon, taking the reins, drove toward Troy, perhaps to bring back, if he could, the corpse of Patroclus.

"See!" shouted Hector. "It is the car of Achilles. Let us seize it!"

He aimed at the driver Automedon, who ran beside, fighting; the spear missed Automedon, but Automedon killed young Aretus, and hung his blood-stained arms on the chariot of Achilles.

And now Minerva, assuming the shape and voice of Phœnix, said to Menelaus, —

"Is the friend of Achilles to lie below the Trojan walls, a prey to the dogs?"

"I wish for nothing more than to guard his body," replied Menelaus. "And oh that Minerva would give me strength to do it! But we cannot resist Hector."

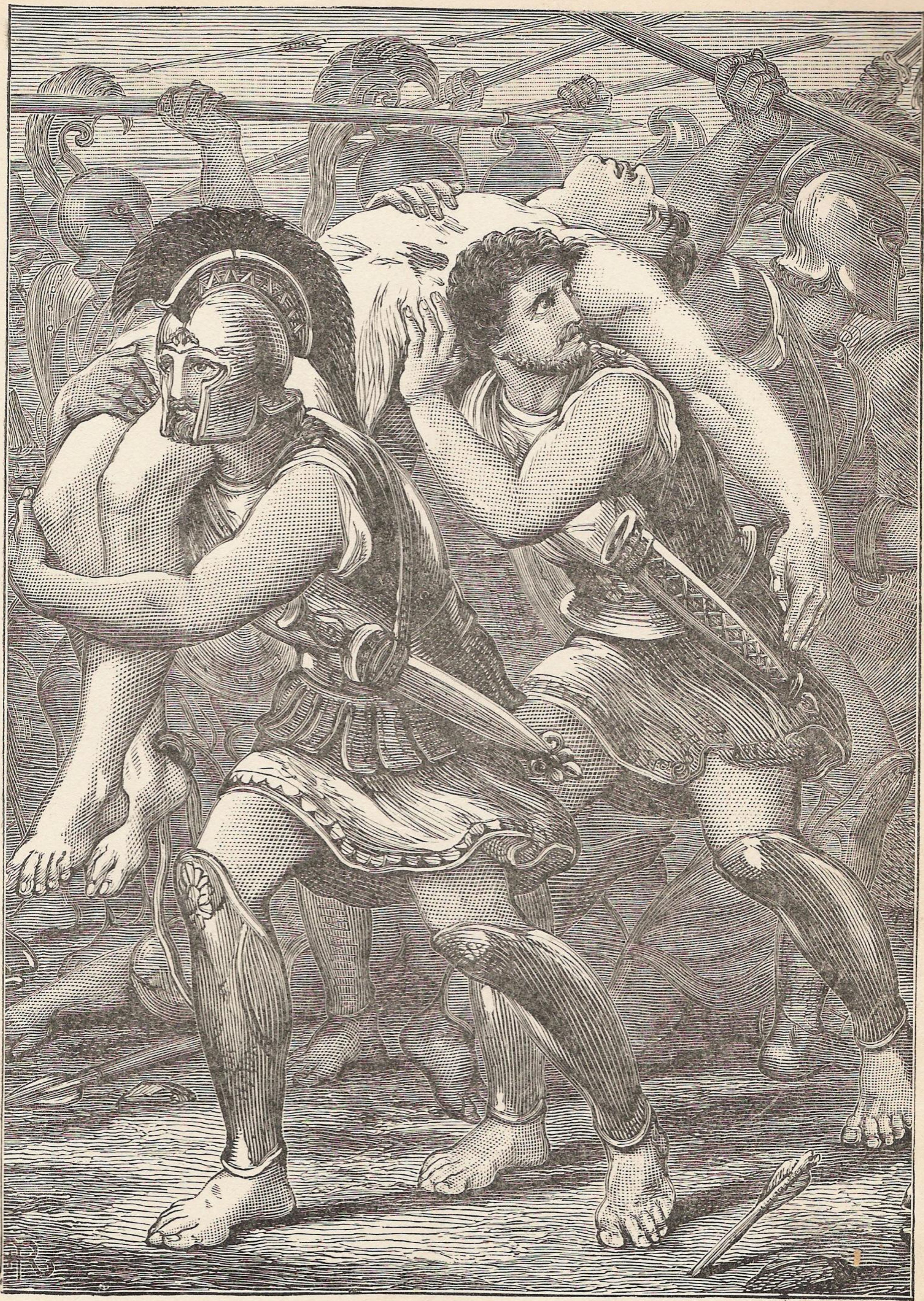
Minerva was pleased at this wish, and she gave Menelaus fresh strength, so that "he sent his heart with every lance he threw." Among those he killed was Podes, a great friend of Hector. As he fell, a voice seemed to say to Hector, —

"Menelaus has killed thy friend, and wilt thou yield to Menelaus?"

Hector started, as if a bee had stung him, and, raging, drove the Greeks before his lance. Ajax spoke despondingly to his comrades, and prayed that the dark cloud which shrouded them might pass away, for he wished to see some one whom he might send to Achilles with news of Patroclus' death. Suddenly the sun scattered the mist, and Ajax bade Menelaus send Antilochus, if he could find him.

"Guard the body of Patroclus," said Menelaus to his men, "while I find Antilochus."

When he at length discovered him busily employed, he sent him to Achilles with the sad news. Antilochus, a young man, cried bitterly, as he hastened to the tent of Achilles. Meanwhile, Menelaus



THE FIGHT AROUND THE BODY OF PATROCLUS.

returned to the scene of action, and helped Ajax and another to lift the body, while others beat off the Trojans who pressed after them. Slowly was the dead man carried toward the Greek lines, the tumult raging behind at every step, amid which might be seen conspicuous in the throng the bulky Ajax, the pious Æneas, and the furious Hector.

CHAPTER XV.

ACHILLES AND HIS NEW ARMOR.

ACHILLES was well-nigh heart-broken at the news which Antilochus brought him. He threw himself on the ground in an agony of grief, and strewed ashes on his head.

His distress was noticed by his mother, Thetis, who, with her attendant maidens, went to comfort him.

"Mother," said Achilles, "my friend Patroclus is slain, and my arms are worn by Hector. I hate life, or only wish to live that I may have revenge!"

"Alas! when Hector falls, thou too must die!" replied Thetis.

"Then let me die," said Achilles. "I will meet Hector, or death. Let me go this instant into the field of glory!"

"Thou canst not go unarmed," replied Thetis. "Stay till the early morrow, and I will bring thee a fresh suit of harness."

So saying, Thetis left her son.

Meanwhile, the dead Patroclus was being carried, foot by foot, into the Grecian lines; and in spite of the efforts of those who bore him and fought about him, he was several times nearly carried off. Indeed, his body was in such peril that Juno urged Achilles to go and prevent his friend from being cast to the dogs.

"I have no arms," replied Achilles; "nor shall I have until to-morrow by the break of day."

"Go, then, unarmed. Go, clad in thy own terrors," urged the goddess. "One glance of thine eye will be enough to give Greece new courage."



ACHILLES IN AN AGONY OF GRIEF.

He rose and left the tent. He stood on the rampart and gave a shout. His voice rang like a trumpet; and at the sound of it the Trojans dropped their arms and fled. Back went the chariots; down fell men and horses together. In this tumult the body of Patroclus was safely conveyed to the Greek lines; and long did Achilles hang over the pale senseless form, as it lay on a lofty bier.

The Trojans meanwhile called a hasty council, and Polydamas advised all to retire within the walls of Troy, as Achilles had again appeared; but Hector indignantly rejected the counsel, and amid loud shouts of applause, he proposed an attack on the fleet as soon as morning dawned.

Now, while the body of Patroclus was being washed and laid on a bed of state, Thetis went to the gloomy workshop of Vulcan, where that prince of blacksmiths, bathed in sweat, was busily engaged in pouring molten gold into moulds prepared for it.

Vulcan had cause of old to be grateful to Thetis, for she had been very kind to him; and as she had come to visit his workshop, he gave over his labors, and having cleaned himself, asked her why she had come to visit him, and what she wished.

"Vulcan," replied she, "my son is the bravest hero that lives. He is now near Troy; but he never will return home. He has been wronged, and has refused to fight. He allowed Patroclus to fight in his armor, and Patroclus is killed, and my son's armor now adorns Hector. I come to ask thee to provide my son with new armor, that he may go into the battle-field, and shine with glory there."

"What I can do I will," replied Vulcan. "I wish I could secure him from death."

Vulcan then returned to his forge, and set his twenty fires to work. He took up his hammer and tongs, and formed, first, an immense shield, on which, in twelve compartments, were towns, assemblies, battles, harvests, animals, dances, peace, and war, and other

scenes of rarest beauty. Besides this, he made everything that a warrior requires,—cuirass for the breast, helm for the head, greaves for the legs. When they were finished, Vulcan laid them at the feet of Thetis; and she, taking them up, carried them swiftly away, and put them in the tent of her son Achilles.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE RECONCILIATION OF ACHILLES AND AGAMEMNON.

WHEN Thetis presented the arms to her son, rage divine was kindled within him.

"Now," said he, as he turned them over to examine them, — "now let me go to the battle. But who is to watch the body of Patroclus?"

"I will take care his body shall not corrupt," replied Thetis. "But go thou and tell the Greek princes that thine anger is past and gone."

She then poured some drops of nectar into the nostrils of the dead man; and Achilles went, obedient to her wishes, and called the chiefs together.

He then stood up, and said, "It had been better for Greece if the maiden about whom they quarrelled had been dead ere their quarrel began. But let bygones be bygones. Here ends the anger of Achilles; and as Greece has bled, so now let Troy. He may be counted happy who shall escape this arm to-day."

Loud shouts of "Achilles! Achilles!" greeted these words.

Agamemnon, without rising from his seat, begged the council not to lay the unhappy quarrel to his charge. "I was driven by fierce, wayward passions to force the prey from Achilles' arms," said he. "What could I do against the will of Heaven? I was misled (even as Jove himself); but do thou, Achilles, help us, and whatever Ulysses promised thee on his visit shall be thine."

"All I care for, O King, is war," replied Achilles. "While we talk, our work remains undone. Let every Greek come and emulate me."

"Our soldiers require rest and food," put in the prudent Ulysses. "Dismiss the assembly, O King, and order a good repast to every band. Spread out the presents thou didst promise to Achilles, in the sight of all, and never let thy kingly might exceed the bounds of reason or justice any more."

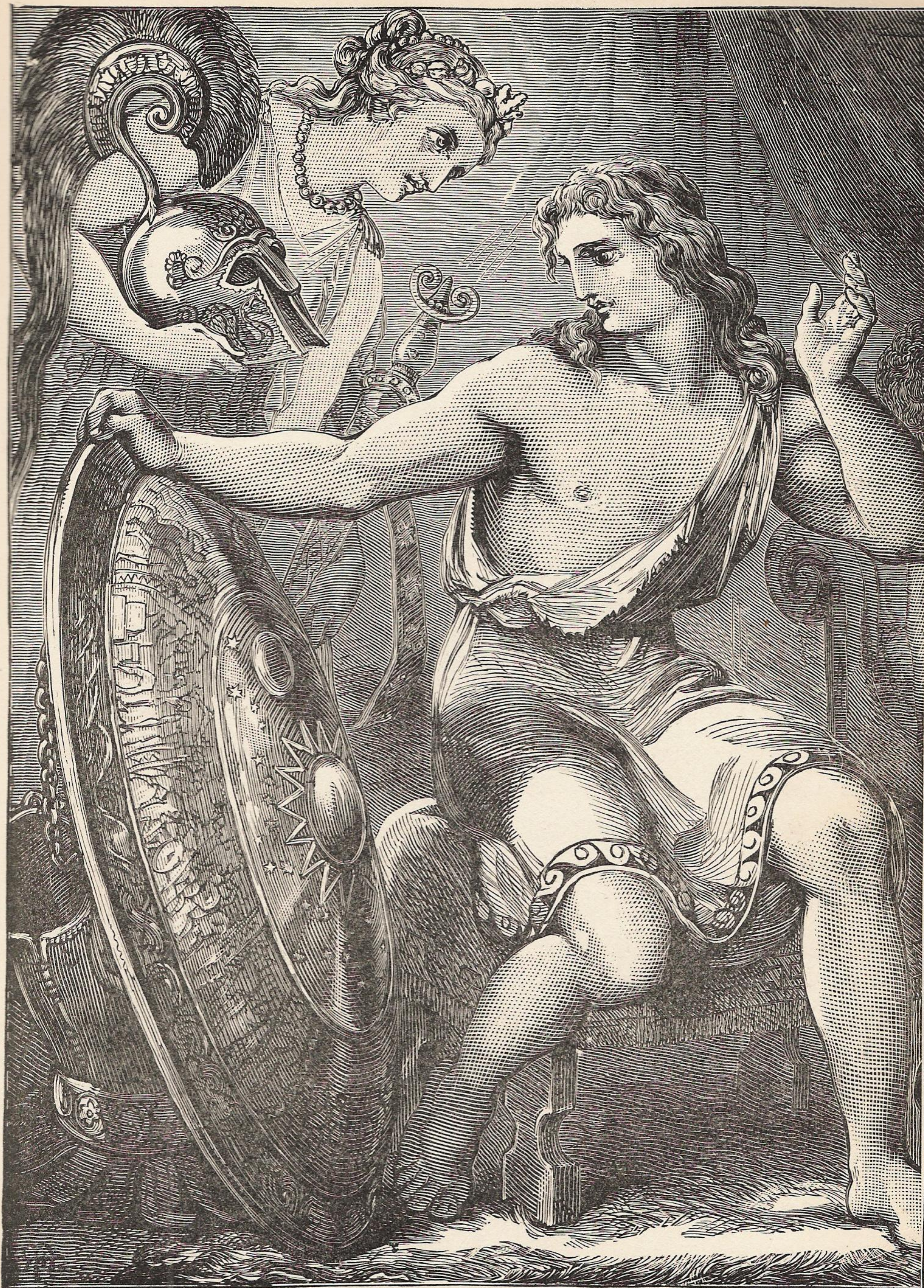
"Thou speakest wisely, Ulysses," said the king. "Grudge not a short delay, Achilles, while the presents are brought and the feast eaten."

"Better go and fight at once," replied Achilles. "I feel that our dead friends are calling for revenge; and were my mind to carry the day; I would go and fight at once. My mouth, at least, shall taste no food until Patroclus is avenged."

"O best and bravest!" argued Ulysses, "it is thine to fight, and mine to reason. Were we to weep for all who die, our grief would be endless. Greece does not honor her dead by fasting. Let our men have a good meal, and then will they be ready to follow thee, more like men than ever."

Achilles moodily consented; the gifts of the king were displayed; and a solemn oath was made.

Achilles then retired to his tent until the soldiers had refreshed themselves with meat and drink, and were ready for the battle. The costly gifts were carried by squires, and deposited in their proper places; and the warriors poured forth upon the plain in all the pomp that is usual in such times. Towering among them all, strode Achilles, full of grief, and furious with thoughts of revenge. His armor was varied and wonderful. His thighs were defended with silver plates; his breast shone all golden; his sword was of well-tempered steel, hanging in a girdle starred with jewels; his broad shield blazed like a full moon. He was charmed with Vulcan's work; it seemed to buoy him up like a bird. He now took his huge spear and shook it; it was made of one entire ash, and none but he could wield it. The chariot and horses were ready. The



ACHILLES' SHIELD AND ARMOR BROUGHT TO HIS TENT.

charioteer leaped lightly into his place, grasped the ivory-studded reins, and whirled his lash about him. Then Achilles stepped in, and gave his orders to the knowing steeds, Xanthus and Ballus, in a loud voice, —

“Be swift, and mindful of me. Bear me through the ranks of the enemy; and do not leave me as you left Patroclus.”

Then Xanthus spoke (for the only time in his life), —

“This day we will bear thee safely; but thy fatal hour will come. Not by our fault fell Patroclus, but by Heaven’s will. Nor when thou fallest will it be our fault; the Fates demand thy death.”

The mouth of Xanthus was then sealed up, and Achilles answered, —

“So let it be. I know I am to die, and never to see my parents nor my home again. I die when it is Heaven’s will. But now — perish Troy!”

So saying, he rushed into the field of battle.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE EXPLOITS OF ACHILLES.

WHEN Achilles had returned to the fight, Jove called a council of gods, and permitted each one to assist either the Greeks or the Trojans. So Mars, Apollo, Venus, and Diana declared for Troy; the rest were for the Greeks. The Trojans were much frightened when they knew that Achilles was once more in the front of the Grecian host.

The poet describes all Nature as sharing in the awful strife now about to begin. There were tempests and earthquakes; thunders rolled; the sea roared; the towers of Troy rocked; and the Greek ships were tossed violently up and down.

Hector was the one object of Achilles' rage. Æneas, however, Hector's cousin, was the first Trojan of high rank whom he met. Thinking that it was Hector, he rushed at him; but seeing who he was, he called out,—

“Go, while thou mayest; only fools stay to feel their fate.”

“Speak thus to men who fear thee,” replied Æneas. “Cease thy words, for our business now is fighting, not talking.”

With that he hurled his spear, and Vulcan's shield received then its first dint. Achilles answered with another throw. His javelin went crashing through the outside edge of the Trojan's shield. Æneas bent his body, and avoided death by a few inches. Achilles then drew his sword, and with loud shouts advanced on his foe, who waited for him with a mighty stone in his hands, such as two common men could not raise.



ÆNEAS AND ACHILLES.

Æneas, however, would have fallen a victim to Achilles, had not a thick darkness been cast over that great hero's eyes. When it had passed away, he found Æneas gone and his own spear returned to him, and lying at his feet.

"Here is my spear," said he, "but where is the Trojan lord? Well, let others bleed. O Greeks, Achilles cannot do everything; but all he can he will do for Greece to-day!"

Hector, in like manner, inspired his soldiers by word and deed. He was warned by his good angel not to encounter Achilles, but to fight among the ranks.

Achilles now began his work of desolation. Iphytion fell at the head of his troops, and Achilles drove his chariot over the body. Then died Demoleon, and Polydore, the youngest of Priam's sons. This youth had been forbidden to go into the field, but he was disobedient, and he died for it. The sight of his young brother thus slain roused Hector, and he came full in front of Achilles.

"Come and receive thy fate!" shouted the Greek.

"Speak so to boys," replied the Trojan. "I know thou art the stronger of the two; but some god may yet guide my spear to thy heart."

He said no more, for Achilles struck at him with his terrible weapon. Hector's hour was not yet come, however; he was suddenly shrouded in a cloudy veil, and Achilles struck once, twice, thrice, four times in vain.

"Again thou hast escaped me, favored by the god of light; but thou shalt fall at last. Fly, inglorious! but thy flight shall cost thy people dear."

Then the savage man glutted his rage on hosts, and drove his chariot over shields, and mangled heaps of dead bodies. The wheels, the horses, the axle-trees, were bloody. It was a frightful scene; and the Trojans fled, pell-mell, part toward the city, and part toward the river Scamander.

Achilles followed the latter, and they leaped into the water, and hid themselves in rocks or caverns. Out of the panting host he dragged twelve youths, whom he sent alive to the camp, to be sacrificed at the funeral of Patroclus.

Priam marked his deadly progress from a high tower, in great alarm. Descending the stairs, he ordered the gates to be thrown open to receive the flying throng. What a hot, weary, dusty, dispirited crowd they were!

One man only withstood Achilles; his name was Agenor. He reasoned thus, —

“ Shall I run away from this terrible fighter, and be slain like the rest? No, I do not choose to fall with the common heap. Shall I try to reach the forest of Mount Ida, and remain there until nightfall, or what shall I do? Perhaps, ere I can turn the wall, he will see me; and if he sees me, there is no escape. After all, I think my best plan will be to meet my fate here, dying for my country.”

So there Agenor stood, disdaining to retreat. His shield he held before him; his hand was ready with a spear. After a few words of defiance he hurled his missile, and it struck Achilles on the knee. To save Agenor from instant death, Apollo made him invisible, and taking Agenor's likeness, fled before the swift Achilles. Swift as he was, Achilles was no match for Apollo, the god of light. Who can catch a sunbeam? Agenor, or he who seemed to be Agenor, led Achilles a fool's dance, here, there, and everywhere; and this gave the Trojans plenty of leisure to put the city walls between themselves and their terrible foe.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DEATH OF HECTOR.

HECTOR yet stood, and alone, outside the Scæan Gate. He waited the return of Achilles, who, as we have seen, had followed Agenor, or him whom he thought to be Agenor, until he found out his mistake. Achilles uttered some angry words, and then went toward the city. Priam, full of anxiety, saw him coming, and like a loving father, he entreated his dear Hector to come within the walls.

“Do not stay there, my brave son,” said the old man. “I think I see thee slain already. O Achilles, how many noble sons of mine hast thou killed! Enter, Hector, enter, and spare thy father! Pity his white hairs!”

As Priam could not turn Hector, his wife Hecuba next tried to melt her son's stubborn purpose. She wept many tears, and spoke many moving words, but Hector remained firm. “No,” said he to himself, “if I enter Troy, it must be as a conqueror. If I die, Troy must see me dying for her. There is no hope of treating for peace with this man. If we meet at all, we meet for war.”

As Hector thus communed with himself, Achilles drew near, and his appearance was so formidable that Hector's courage clean forsook him, and he fled. He fled; and Achilles pursued him, as a hawk pursues a dove. Three times did they course round the walls of Troy, and all the while the fate of Hector and of Troy hung in the balance.

At length, Achilles, wearied, or pretending to be so, halted. This gave Hector new courage, and he advanced toward his foe. They soon met, Hector saying, "Something bids me try thy fate or mine; but hear me a moment. Let us swear that whoever survives this duel shall respect the body of the other."

But Achilles declared he was in no humor for making promises. Hector he detested utterly, and he had no thought nor wish but to put him to death.

As he spoke, he hurled his spear; it whistled harmlessly over Hector's head. Hector then threw his, but the heavenly shield broke its force. "Bring another spear, Deiphobus!" shouted he. But, alas for him! no Deiphobus was there. His only refuge now was his sword. Drawing this, he flew on Achilles, who waved his spear round and round, looking for a joint where he thought it would enter. He spied one in the throat; and into that, with unerring aim, he drove the point of his weapon. It entered deep into Hector's neck, and the blow stretched him dying on the ground.

"So thou art there at last, Hector, — thou who didst fear no vengeance from Patroclus' death! He sleeps in peace, honored and lamented. Thou shalt be given to the dogs and vultures."

Hector entreated him to spare his body this disgrace; but the ferocious Achilles declared he would not thus gratify him, were Troy to offer him all it had. Then, Hector, dying, warned Achilles of his own near fate, to be brought about by Paris.

"Yes, I shall follow thee soon," said the Greek hero, as he stripped Hector of his armor. Others now flocked to the spot, — some loudly admiring the noble form of the dead man, others meanly defacing it with ungenerous wounds.

Achilles bade them bring the corpse in triumph to the shore, and to sing meanwhile, "Hector is dead, and Troy is fallen!"

Holes were bored in the dead man's ankles, and his own belt (the gift of Ajax) was inserted; and his body was by this dragged along, his beautiful hair and graceful head trailing on the ground.



THE DEATH OF HECTOR.

What were the feelings of his parents? Their sorrow was extreme; and the whole city was clouded with gloom.

"Let me go," said Priam, "and bow before Achilles. He has a father like me. Perhaps he will pity me. O Hector, thy death sinks me into the tomb!"

"Ay," echoed Hecuba, "why have I lived to see my noble son's death?"

But where was Andromache, the wife of the fallen man? She had heard nothing of her husband's being outside the gate. She thought him safe, even after he was dead. The servants were preparing a bath for him on his return; and their mistress was at her loom, embroidering flowers on the work.

"What noise is that?" asked she. "It is my mother's voice. Something, I feel sure, is wrong. I fear my Hector is slain!"

Andromache flew from her embroidery, and mounted the battlements of the city. Thence she saw (with the quick eye of love) her Hector dragged along. After that fearful sight, all seemed darkness, and she fell fainting to the ground.

Her ladies did what they could to restore her, but it was almost cruel to bring the poor woman back to consciousness. "Would I never had been born!" she sighed. "I am desolate indeed! My child never will smile on his father again! Poor Astyanax! What may not he expect, unhappy boy! And, O my Hector, to think of thee, exposed, far from the loving hands of thy mother and thy wife!"

Her ladies answered her with tears and sighs, and the city streets echoed with the sounds of lamentation and woe.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE FUNERAL RITES OF PATROCLUS.

WHEN Achilles had returned to the Grecian camp, he told his soldiers they must not rest until they had done honor to the body of Patroclus. Three times did he and his followers march in procession round the dead man's bier, and then Achilles laid his hands on the cold breast, saying, —

“Hector, who slew thee, is dead. I will give his body to the dogs, and twelve Trojans will I slay here about thine.”

He then flung Hector's corpse down before the bier, and after that he and his friends went to a feast in his ship. He would not wash Hector's blood from his hands; and he remained reluctantly among his troops until they had eaten. Afterward he spent the night by the sad sea waves. Long did he keep awake groaning on the shore; and when at last he fell asleep, he saw Patroclus, who said, —

“Can Achilles sleep while his friend is unburied? Bury me; for I can find no rest as long as my body remains above ground. And take care that our ashes remain in a common grave.”

“O more than brother,” replied Achilles, “art thou once more returned? Let me embrace thee.”

But as he attempted to fold the figure in his arms, it cried out and slipped away like smoke, and Achilles found that it was a dream.

When morning came, Agamemnon sent wagons and men to Mount Ida to hew down oaks for Patroclus' funeral. The pile of wood being made, the whole army was present in full uniform

The Greeks cut off their locks, and scattered them on the corpse; and Achilles, hanging sadly over his friend, laid a lock of his own hair on the cold hand. He then requested Agamemnon to order the troops to retire, while the chiefs remained to finish the ceremony. It was a cruel one. On the top of the pile they laid the body of Patroclus, together with sheep, oxen, honey, and oil. Four horses, two favorite dogs, and, worst of all, twelve hapless human captives, were then slaughtered, and laid about the heap.

"I have now fully paid my promise," said Achilles to his friend; "but Hector's body shall be a prey to the dogs."

As the pile burned very slowly, Achilles prayed to the winds to blow. They obeyed; and a brisk breeze sprang up, under the influence of which the wood burned more rapidly. All night long did Achilles stay, watching the fire, and then he retired to sleep.

Next morning he picked out the bones of Patroclus from the embers, and placed them in a golden vase. A building was then reared on the sands to enclose it. Games were then held, rich prizes offered; and generals competed for them, Achilles sitting as judge. First came the chariot races. Among those who contended for this prize were Eumelus, Diomed, Menelaus, Meriones, and one of old Nestor's sons. Off they started, all together, at the word of command,—every whip sounding, every voice shouting. There were clouds of dust, amid which might be seen now and then the smoking chariots, and the drivers, as it were, hanging in the air over their flying steeds. First came Eumelus, and close upon him Diomed. But an accident happened to Eumelus' chariot. It was broken, and he was thrown out; and so Diomed won. Behind came Menelaus, closely followed by Nestor's son.

"Come," said Nestor's son to his horses, "though we cannot beat Diomed, we ought to be ashamed if we cannot beat Menelaus."

And by dashing on at a very narrow place, where Menelaus slackened pace, fearing an overthrow, Nestor's son came in second.

Achilles, having given Diomed the first prize, awarded the second to Eumelus, who had been thrown out. This offended Nestor's son, who declared that he would have the second prize because he came in second. The justice of this plea was admitted, and Nestor's son received the second prize, while to Eumelus was given a "consolation prize." But Menelaus had a charge to make against Nestor's son.

"He got the better of me by fraud," said he. "He dare not swear that he has acted fairly."

"Well, well," said Nestor's son, "sooner than quarrel with Menelaus, I will resign the mare." And he did so.

"It is now my turn to yield," said Menelaus; and he at once waived his claim to the mare, and was content with the third prize.

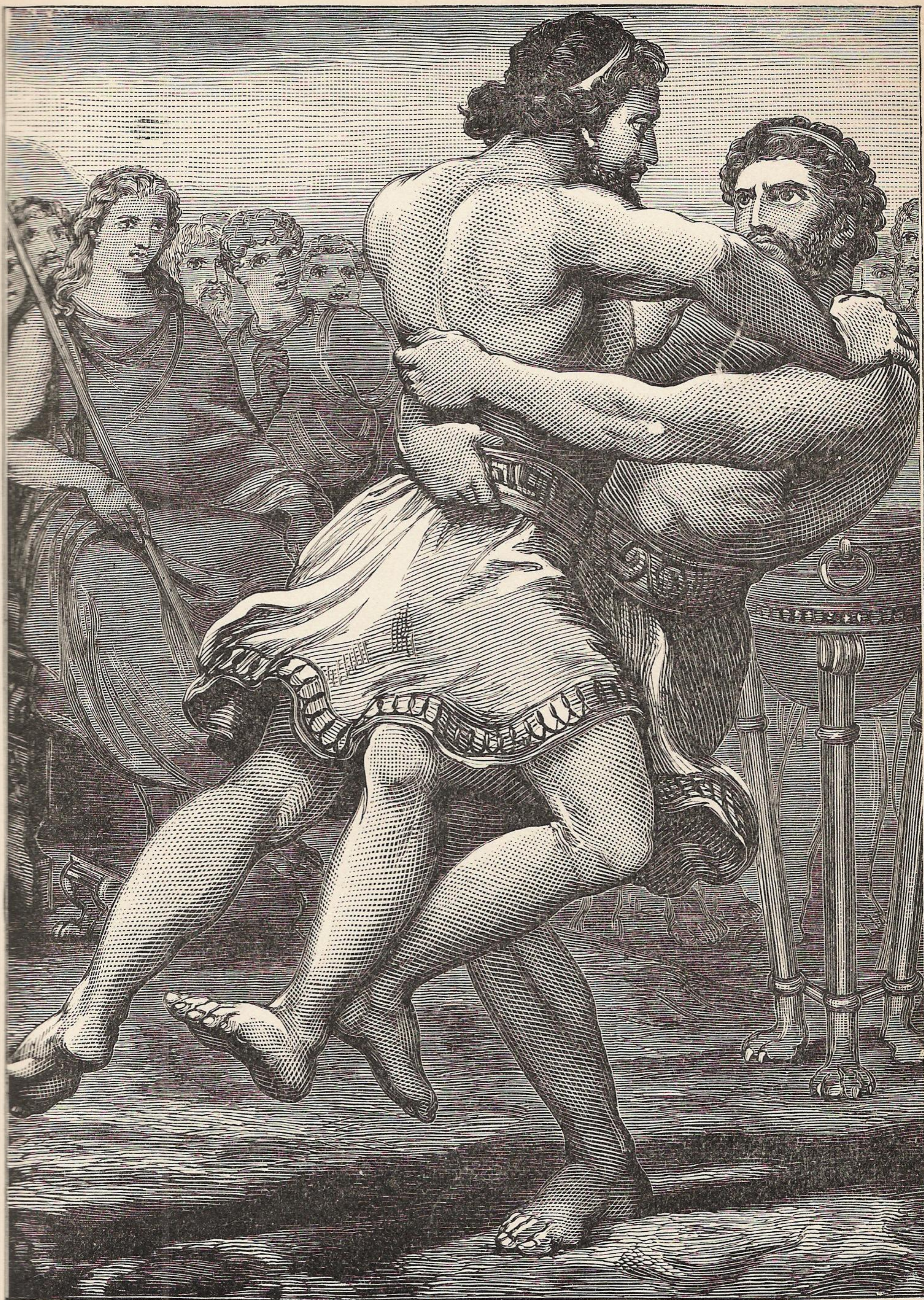
Then came a boxing-match, with heavy iron gloves, for a mule and a goblet. The gigantic Epeus uprose, and shouted out, —

"The mule is mine; for who dare stand a blow from me?"

A man named Euryalus, urged by his friend Diomed, accepted the challenge, and put on the iron gauntlet. After several blows given and taken, Epeus dealt his rival one full on his cheek, and down he fell, stunned and bleeding. Epeus, extending his hand, lifted him up, and he staggered faintly away.

Then Ajax and Ulysses wrestled for a prize. It was a fine sight to see brute strength matched against perfect skill. At length Ulysses threw Ajax, and fell on him. There, in honorable dust, they continued rolling, each unbeaten, until Achilles ended the well-contested struggle by praising both as equally winners.

Then came a foot-race, in which the lesser Ajax, Ulysses, and Nestor's son contended. Ajax was the best runner; but he stumbled on a slippery place, and there he lay, cross and dirty, while everybody laughed, and Ulysses came in first. Nestor's son made such a polite and pretty speech that he got a whole talent instead of half a one as his prize.



AJAX AND ULYSSES WRESTLING.

Then did the huge Ajax and the brave Diomed fight a duel, sheathed in complete armor. It was fought for the arms of Sarpedon. In this combat, short and furious, Diomed had the advantage; and the Greeks, fearing harm might come of it, interposed, and put a stop to the duel.

Then came the throwing of the quoit, — a mass of iron which once belonged to Aetion, whom Achilles slew.

“He who can throw this farthest shall have it,” said the judge of the sports.

Four very strong men stood up to throw, named Polypœtes, Leonteus, Ajax, and Epeus. The prize fell to Polypœtes, though Ajax made a very great throw.

The archery followed. A pole was set in the ground; and a milk-white pigeon was tied to the pole by a cord. Ten double-edged axes were for him who struck the fluttering bird, and ten single-edged axes for him whose arrow divided the cord. Teucer shot first. His arrow cleft the cord. The bird flew away, and Meriones shot it dead.

The throwing of the dart closed the funeral games. For this Agamemnon was about to contend, and Meriones; but Achilles gracefully offered Agamemnon both the prizes, saying that “no one ought to be thought able to surpass their general.” And Agamemnon, with equal grace, gave the prizes away, — one to Meriones, the other to Talthybius.

CHAPTER XX.

HECTOR'S BODY RANSOMED AND BURIED.

ACHILLES could not yet sleep. His thoughts were busied about his dear friend and the happy past. He went over all the deeds which they had done, and all the journeys they had taken together; and he poured out his griefs to the sea until the east was crimson with dawn. He then yoked his steeds to his chariot, and dragged Hector's body thrice round the monument of Patroclus. Not till then could the savage hero sleep.

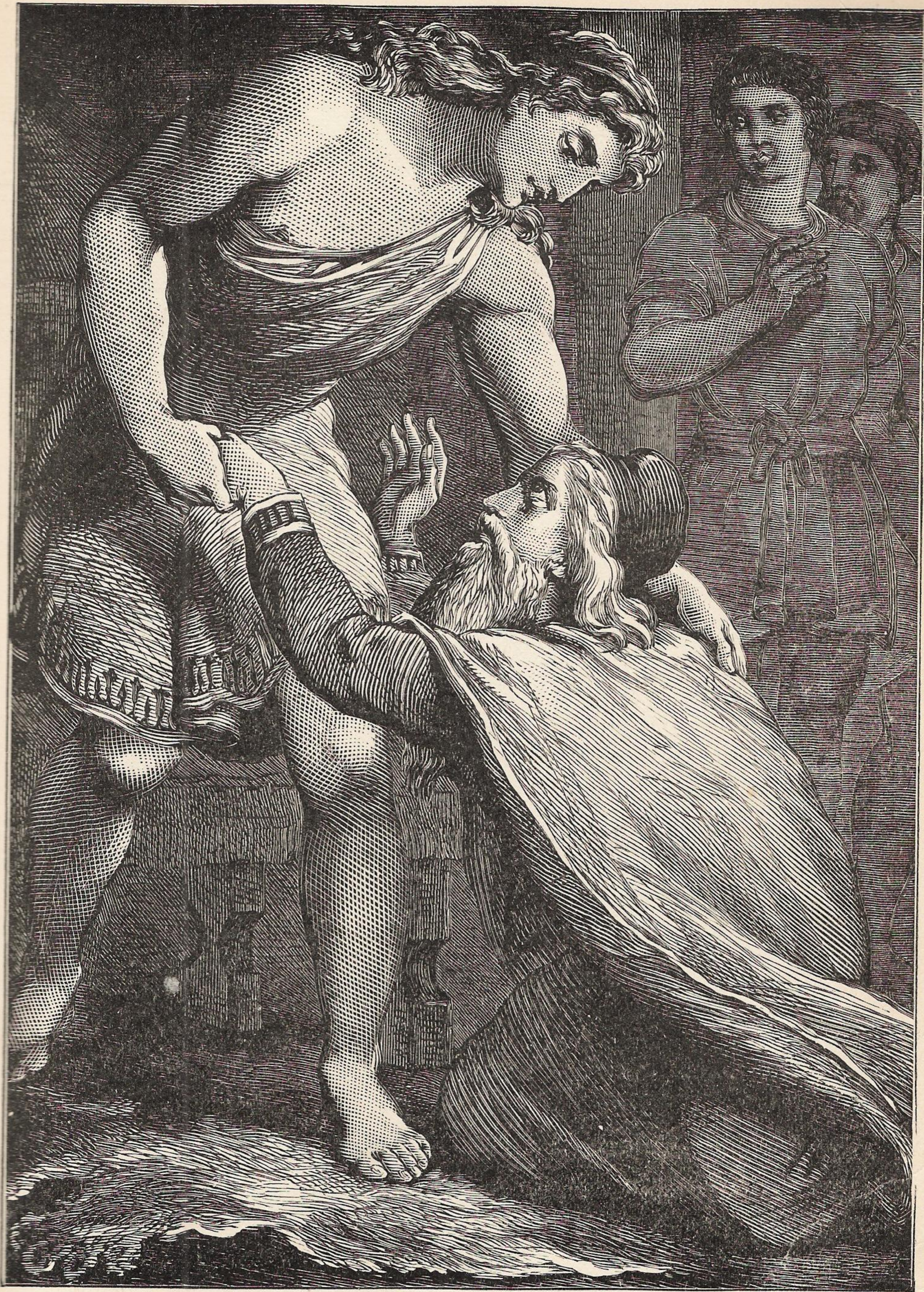
Moved by his mother Thetis, he at length consented to restore Hector's body; and about the same time Iris went to induce Priam to go in person and beg for it. He was to go alone, and without fear. Hecuba thought his going was sheer madness, but he would not listen to his wife's counsel.

"Heaven orders me to go," said he, "and all thy talking is useless. If I am to die in the Grecian camp, I am content."

Priam then selected some costly gifts which he thought proper for the occasion, and set forth on his melancholy errand. The poor old man had become peevish. He called his sons inglorious, and he said, —

"Mars has taken my best, and left me none but gluttons and dancers."

They heard their father in silence, and brought forth the chariot and placed in it the gifts. Ere he started, Hecuba came out with a golden bowl full of wine, which she bade him pour out to Jove. He did so, having first washed his hands. He then prayed that Achilles



PRIAM ENTREATING ACHILLES TO GIVE UP THE BODY OF HECTOR.

might be in a merciful mood, and he asked for a sign that his prayers were heard. This was given; and when Hecuba saw it, she was happier; and Priam, driven by Idæus, then went forth across the lonely fields. Mercury, like a handsome youth, came to him as his mules were drinking at Ilus' fountain. Priam was startled, but the youth allayed his fears, saying, —

“I will not harm thee.”

“I am going through dangers,” said Priam; “but I am under heavenly care, and I hail thee as my guide. Is it not so?”

Mercury said he was one of Achilles' soldiers, and would guide him to his chief.

“Tell me,” said Priam, anxiously, “where my son's body is. Is it torn or is it whole?”

“Neither dogs nor birds have touched it,” replied the young man. “Hector lies strong and majestic in death.”

“Heaven is good,” cried the old man. “My son never forgot Heaven, and Heaven does not forget him. But take me safely to Achilles, and I will give thee this goblet.”

“I may not receive gifts,” said the stranger; “but I will take thee where thou fain wouldst go.”

So saying, he took the reins, and drove rapidly to Achilles' tent, where he vanished. Priam entered, and entreated Achilles to give up Hector's body.

“Think of thine own father,” implored he, “and pity me.”

The stern warrior was moved. He lifted up the poor old man; and gazing on his white head and kingly form, he said, —

“Unhappy man, what sorrow thou hast known! And what a bold heart thou must have, to come hither and face thy furious enemy! Do not mourn; what must be, must be. My father has his evil to bear, as well as thou. I am his only son, and I am doomed to die in a foreign land.”

“Oh, give me Hector,” murmured Priam, “and take my gifts. I ask no more.”

"Do not try to bend my will by thy tears and offerings," replied Achilles, somewhat crossly. "I mean to yield thy Hector. I have been inclined so to do by my mother. Seek not to move me, then, by thy arts."

So saying, he went and wrapped Hector's body in a carpet and mantle, and placed it in Priam's chariot. At the same time he begged Patroclus to forgive him, if he had done wrong in yielding up the body.

He then said to Priam, —

"Thou shalt have thy son's corpse to-morrow morning; but now thou must eat and drink, lest thou suffer like Niobe. Remember the griefs of other parents, and lessen thine own. Hector shall be wept and buried, and rest in peace."

After a bounteous meal, Priam begged he might retire, for, said he, —

"I have never slept since Hector died."

Achilles then bade his servants prepare a bed worthy of the guest; but before Priam withdrew he asked him what length of time he would require for the funeral of Hector.

"Nine days," replied Priam, "for mourning, and the tenth for the funeral; the eleventh for the monument, and the twelfth for war, if war we must!"

"So be it," replied Achilles. "So long, then, we agree to suspend the fall of Troy."

He then said, "Good-night;" and they separated. Very early in the morning Priam was aroused, and warned to lose no time. He obeyed, and drove rapidly toward Troy. When Cassandra, the prophetess, saw her dead brother, she began to weep afresh; and her cries aroused the citizens, who, with Hecuba and Andromache at their head, met Priam near the Scæan Gate.

Hector's body was laid on a bed of state amid loud sounds of lamentation. Andromache threw her white arms around his neck.

"O my Hector!" cried she. "I am now desolate, and Troy shall sink, a smoking ruin. Who can now protect her? My son, thou wilt be a slave, or else be hurled headlong from the tower by some revengeful Greek! Oh, why did I not hold my dying Hector's hand, and hear his last words?"

After the afflicted widow, spoke the sorrowing mother. She could rejoice, she said, even in her great grief, because Hector's body, though it had been so maltreated, remained fair and majestic.

Next, the beauteous Helen, weeping bitterly, made her lament over him whom she called her dearest friend. She praised him for being so gentle as well as so brave. Never had she had from him, in twenty years, one unkind word. By others she had been insulted, their pride and their scorn had entered her soul; but Hector had never once reproached her.

As twelve days had been granted by Achilles for an armistice,¹ the oxen and wains went in safety to Mount Ida, and returned laden with wood for the funeral pile.

On the tenth day of the armistice the pile was reared, and when Hector's body was placed on it, the wood was set on fire. When the flames had done their work, the embers were quenched with wine, and the bones of Hector were gathered and placed in a golden vase. This was then wrapped in a pall of purple, and buried. All Troy was present at the funeral of her greatest hero; and when the last rites were complete, the multitude returned in solemn silence to the doomed city.

¹ An armistice is a short peace.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE END OF THE SIEGE.

TROY was taken soon after the death of Hector, by means of a wooden horse which was brought into the city. Inside it several of the bravest Greeks were concealed.

Troy fell about B. C. 1184; so all these events happened more than three thousand years ago. And what became of the several chiefs who have figured in these tales?

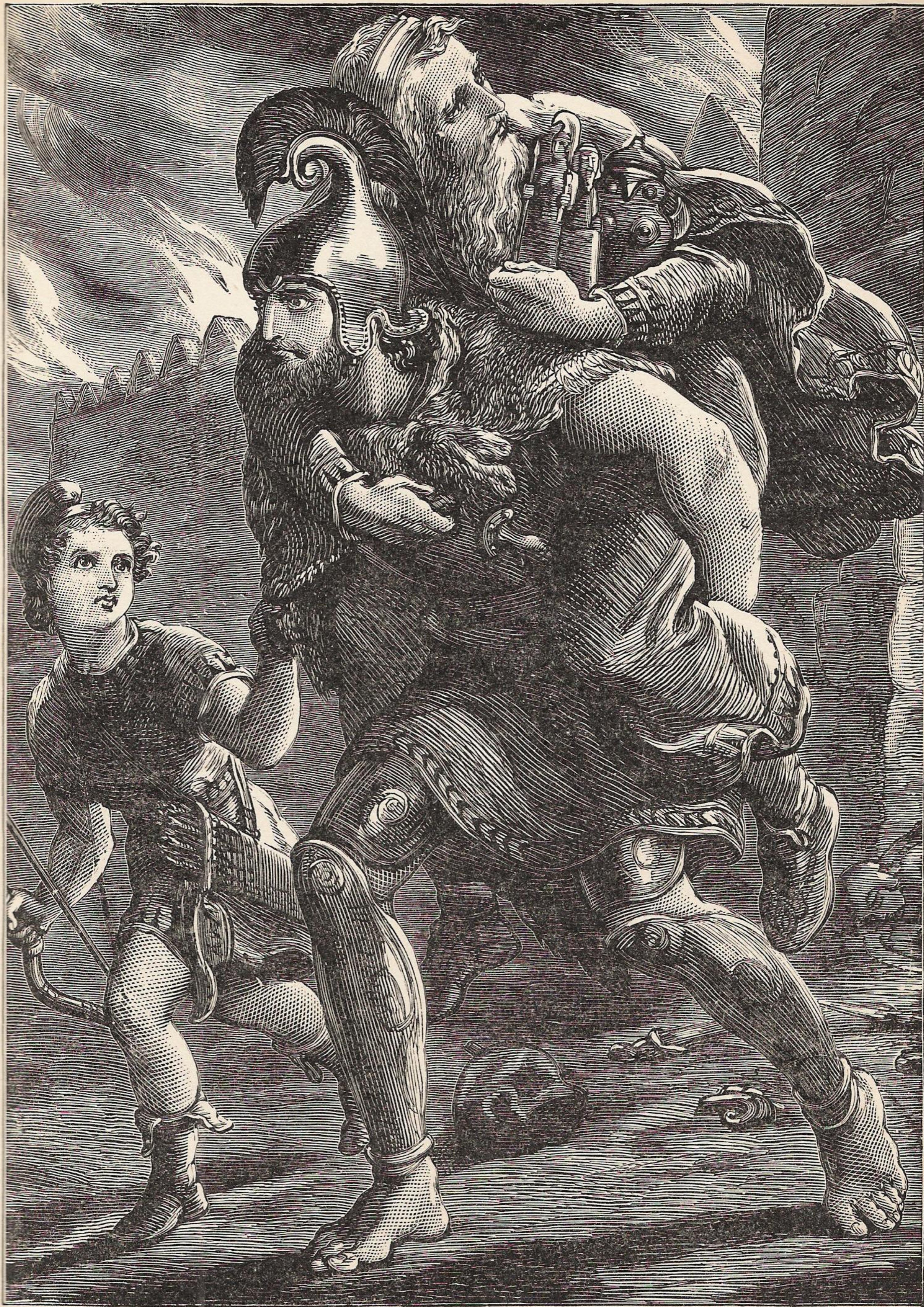
Achilles, the terrible, was shot in the heel by Paris. It was rather a shameful end for so great a soldier, to die from a wound in the heel made by the woman-warrior Paris.

Agamemnon, the king of men, and leader of the whole Greek army, met a still more tragic fate. When he returned home, he was murdered by his own wife, the wicked Clytemnestra, who had ceased to love him.

The unfortunate Ajax, strong and brave, but rather heavy and stupid, longed for the armor of Achilles after that great hero was dead. Ulysses, however, obtained it; and Ajax, in a fit of rage, killed himself with the sword Hector had given him. Ulysses wandered about the world many years, and endured a long series of dangers and toils ere he reached his home in Ithaca.

Diomed nearly shared the fate of his chief, Agamemnon, from his bad wife Ægiale; but he managed to escape from her snares, and found a refuge in Apulia.

Priam was killed by Pyrrhus, a son of Achilles. Paris, too, was slain; and the fair Helen, for whom so many brave men had died,



ÆNEAS CARRYING HIS FATHER ANCHISES FROM TROY.

married a brother of Paris. Him she afterward betrayed, in order to make her peace with her former husband, Menelaus, who forgave her and took her back to his house.

Old Nestor died in peace, among his children in his native Pylos. Æneas, when Troy was burning, carried his father Anchises out of the fire on his back. After many wanderings he came into Italy, and became king of the Latins. At the end of some years he was slain in a battle with the Tuscans.

THE ADVENTURES OF ULYSSES.

THE ADVENTURES OF ULYSSES.

CHAPTER I.

THE CYCLOPS POLYPHEMUS.

AFTER the ten years' siege and fall of Troy, Ulysses, one of the Greek leaders, embarked, hoping to return to Ithaca at once; but he was doomed to wander for another ten years ere he could embrace his wife and son. First of all, he took vengeance on a Ciconian city, because it had assisted the Trojans. And when it was taken, Ulysses was for instant departure; but his sound advice was set aside by the rest, who wished to enjoy themselves with the spoils of the captured city. As they were eating and drinking merrily, the Ciconians, who had recovered their spirits, attacked the Greeks, and killed many of them. The others hurried off, as fast as they could, to the ships in the bay; but they had only escaped one danger to fall into another. A dreadful storm came on; and for two days the fleet was in the utmost peril. On the third day the tempest abated; and they were able to hoist their sails to the gentle breeze, which wafted them to the island where a curious race of men lived, called the Lotus-eaters. They who ate of the lotus fruit forgot their every care, and all their old friends. Three of Ulysses' crew, having eaten of the lotus, wished to remain; and it needed the application of main force to remove them. It was wisely resolved

to quit this dreamy island at once, and so they embarked again and ploughed the blue sea once more.

Soon after this they reached the island Lachæa, where the goat wanders safely in the thicket and bounds from crag to crag, — a beautiful island, where the vine bears abundance of grapes, and the meadows are always green. Here Ulysses and his friends obtained a supply of goats' flesh, and had a good meal. After a refreshing slumber he went with some of his party to the neighboring land of the Cyclops, who were creatures of a huge size, with only one eye in the middle of their foreheads. When they got there, they found a cave sheltered with laurels, and many sheep and goats lying about. They also saw a gigantic shepherd standing by, as if he were on the lookout for robbers.

Ulysses and his party crept into the cave, where they saw cheeses and milk-pails and bleating lambs and sheep. "Let us take some of these cheeses and be off," said one. "And we may as well have some of these sheep too," said another. But Ulysses was curious to see the owner of the cave, and he advised his friends to wait until he came. So having made a good meal off the giant's milk and cheese, they remained in the cave rather too long, as it happened; for in came the owner, and he proved a terrible fellow. He had a load of wood on his back, which he flung on the ground with a thundering noise. The intruders now wished that they had not entered the cave, especially when, after the sheep and goats had entered, the giant rolled an enormous stone against the only way of retreat. He then milked his goats, and made his cheese; and afterward he threw some dry wood on the fire, which made a bright blaze, and revealed Ulysses and his friends to the terrible giant.

In a voice of thunder he said, glaring at the trembling Greeks, "Who are you? And what are you doing in my house?"

When Ulysses had recovered his courage, he told the giant his name was "Noman," and his friends were Greeks, returning from

the conquest of Troy. "Of late," continued the wily Ulysses, "we were conquerors, but now are we humble suppliants, seeking your hospitality; and we are sure Jove will reward you if you help us, and punish you if you do us wrong."

"Jove!" roared the angry Cyclops. "I care nought for Jove; and you must be a fool to think it. But where is your ship anchored? Tell me that."

"Oh," replied the cautious Ulysses, "she ran against a rock and sank, and we swam to the shore."

Whether the giant saw through the falsehood or not, he became suddenly enraged with his visitors; and lifting up two of the Greeks, he dashed out their brains on the rocky floor of the cave. He then gobbled up the men he had killed as easily as a lion would have done, and then he washed down his supper with a great pailful of milk.

Then the disgusting creature fell asleep; and Ulysses drew his sword, and motioned to his followers to escape, after they had killed the giant as he slept. But on reflection he saw that this was not a good plan. "If I kill the Cyclops," thought he, "who is to roll the huge stone away from the mouth of the cave?"

So they remained on the watch, but inactive; and the night hours wore away, and the morning came, and the dreadful monster got up and did his household work, and then killed two Greeks, and breakfasted off their flesh. In high good humor he then left the cave, driving his flock before him, and whistling gayly as he went; nor did he forget to close the door behind him, and so the miserable Greeks were shut up as in a tomb.

But Ulysses was not the man to give way to despair. He hit on a plan to be quits with the disgusting ogre, which was this. The giant had left behind him a walking-stick, or club; it was made of the trunk of a big tree. The Greeks spent some time in sharpening one end of this club, and then they hid it, intending, when next the giant slept, to thrust it into his one eye.

The evening came; and the ferocious man-eater, after doing his work, slew two more unhappy wretches, and made his supper off them.

Now, Ulysses happened to have brought with him a skin of wine of remarkable strength. He now boldly advanced to the giant, and offered him a large bowl of his wine, saying if he would only let them go, they would supply him with any quantity of such excellent liquor. The giant was greatly pleased with the wine, and asked for more; and Ulysses was glad to give him as much as he could drink. The giant was so pleased with the wine that he swore that he would grant the giver of it one boon, which was a singular one. He asked Ulysses his name, and the hero replied, "Noman."

"Well, then," grunted the half-tipsy ogre, "I will promise one boon to the giver of such excellent wine. 'Noman' shall be the last of the party I will devour."

Three times over did the giant drain the cup, and the heady liquor at length began to tell its tale. His chin dropped on his breast, and he began to snore like thunder. The Greeks — now, alas! reduced to seven — brought out the sharply pointed mast, rammed it ever so far into his solitary eye, and at the same time gave it a motion like that a carpenter gives to his gimlet.

The giant's snoring at once changed to roaring! With passionate haste he plucked the mast from his eye-socket, and groped about for his tormentors, but he could not find them; and then, stumbling to the rock-door, he pushed it open, and with a voice loud enough to wake the dead, he called for help. His friends were soon on the spot, asking, "What is all the noise about?" "Who has hurt thee, Polyphemus?" "Have there been sheep-stealers in thy fold?"

"'Noman' has killed me! 'Noman' has hurt me!" shrieked the frantic monster.

"Well," argued his comrades, "if it be true that no *man* has done thee an injury, — if it be the hand of a god which has hurt



ULYSSES POURING OUT WINE INTO THE GIANT'S BOWL.

thee, — then shouldst thou bear the stroke with patience.” So saying, his comforters strode away from the cavern.

The blind giant now groped his way into his cave, and felt carefully each sheep and goat as it passed out into the meadow. But Ulysses was too crafty for the giant; for with great skill he had tied three rams together with bands of osier, and had bound a man under the middle one.

Thus, eighteen rams conveyed his six companions in safety out of the cave. The nineteenth ram was the stalwart leader of the flock; and Ulysses, breathing a silent prayer to Jove, clung to the ram’s belly with the grip of a drowning man, and so escaped from the cave, leaving the awful giant to storm and rage as he liked.

When the Greeks were on board again, they taunted their enemy loudly; and he, hearing the sound, hurled a vast mass of rock in its direction, with so true an aim for a blind man that the ship was all but destroyed. Once more Ulysses spoke, and told him that it was Ulysses which had robbed him of his eye. The giant replied by earnestly imploring the god Neptune to prevent Ulysses’ return, — a prayer which the god heard and answered in good time.

CHAPTER II.

CIRCE THE ENCHANTRESS.

AFTER escaping from the Cyclops, Ulysses and his friends reached the island of Æolus, which was an island that floated about. Æolus had six sons and six daughters, and they lived very happily together. Here Ulysses and his comrades stayed a full month; and the wanderer amused Æolus with stories of his battles and adventures. Æolus had a peculiar power over the winds; he could shut them up in a great leather bag whenever he pleased. And when Ulysses told Æolus where he was going, his kind-hearted host gave him some winds shut up in bags which would have blown him back; and he assured him that if he kept the bags closed until he reached Ithaca, all would go well with him.

After thanking Æolus, Ulysses and his friends set sail; and when ten days had gone by, they saw the purple hills of their home. With a grateful sigh, Ulysses fell asleep, worn out with watching night after night. While he slept, his companions found the leather bags, and were very curious to know what they contained. One said one thing, and one another; and so to make sure, they untied the mouths of the bags. Out flew the winds, glad to escape; and being adverse winds, they blew the ship back to the island which the Greeks had left ten days ago. They landed, and implored King Æolus to help them; but he thought they must be wicked men, and he drove them from his shores with much anger. With heavy hearts the mariners once more put out to sea;

and after six days they beheld the towers of Samos hanging over a beautiful landlocked bay. The suspicious eye of Ulysses did not fancy the bay, fair as it looked; but his comrades entreated him to steer into its calm waters. No men saw they, nor signs of life, except some smoke; and three of the crew were sent to explore. They met a young lady by a spring of water, who showed them the way to the house whence the smoke came. A gigantic woman first appeared, and then a man of equal stature. One of the Greeks was seized and slain in a moment, and the other two managed to run back and give the alarm. In a moment, it seemed, the cliffs were thronged with gigantic forms, and vast masses of rock were hurled into the sea, causing great destruction. In rage and grief, the unhappy Ulysses, with a few survivors, left the fair and fatal shore, and after a while reached the Ææan Bay, where the famous enchantress Circe lived. As before, smoke was seen rising from a grove of trees; and this was the only sign of the island being inhabited.

The party was divided into two bands, — one being under Ulysses, and the other under Eurylochus; and having drawn lots out of a brazen helmet, it fell to the latter party to go first on a tour of exploration.

Eurylochus and his men soon found a handsome palace of stone in a wooded valley. When they advanced to the door, they heard a woman's voice; she was singing a very sweet song. One of the band shouted out, "May we enter?" and the door, in reply, seemed to fly open of its own accord. The singer now begged them to walk in; and all except Eurylochus did so. He suspected some evil. The fair lady requested the Greeks to be seated; and she then offered them refreshments, in the shape of bread and cheese, honey and wine. These viands were all drugged with a mixture that darkened the mind, and made it forgetful of its home.

When the unhappy Greeks were thus in Circe's power, she

waved a fatal wand, and they were turned into swine, though they still retained a human mind and voice.

When Eurylochus saw what had happened, he was speechless with horror; and he returned and told Ulysses, who started up and bade him lead the way to Circe's accursed palace. Eurylochus fell down at Ulysses' feet, and entreated him not to go; but Ulysses sternly replied that if Eurylochus would not go with him, he would go alone.

When he drew near the magic palace, Mercury met him and said:

"Where are you going? All your friends are in pigsties, and do you suppose you are clever enough to avoid their fate? You will fall as they have done, unless you take this plant, which prevents Circe's drugs from doing harm. With this you may enter the palace, and eat and drink in safety. As soon as Circe waves her wand and expects to see you changed into a swine, draw out your sword and threaten her with instant death. This, showing your power, will cause Circe to fall in love with you."

Mercury then plucked a plant with a white flower, called moly; and having given it to Ulysses, he left him. Ulysses did as he was told; and when Circe began her dreadful incantations, he was able to resist their power and remain a man. Having drawn out his sword and threatened her, he saw her tremble.

"Who art thou?" said she. "Art thou the man from Troy who is so famous for wisdom? Art thou indeed Ulysses? If so, let there be love and peace between us."

"How can I love you, Circe," replied Ulysses, "when my dear comrades are turned into four-footed beasts? I will show you no love at all, unless you first swear that you mean me no harm."

Circe took the oath; and Ulysses, reassured, put up his sword, and allowed himself to be seated at the ample board. But he could not eat,—he was too anxious for that; and when she asked him why he partook of nothing, he answered, "I cannot eat while my



CIRCE TURNING ULYSSES' COMPANIONS INTO SWINE.

friends are beasts." Whereupon Circe rose up, and went to the sty and touched the hogs, who became men once more. They embraced Ulysses, and wept tears of joy; and even Circe, hard as she was, felt touched. She then begged Ulysses to fetch the rest of his companions from the ship, — which he did.

While he was away, Circe refreshed her victims, and they all lived together in her palace for a whole year, forgetful of Ithaca.

One day, however, they all came to Ulysses, and asked him whether he meant them to stay in Circe's palace forever. He thereupon went to her, and said how anxious they all were to get home.

She replied: "I have no wish to detain you; but you must not hope to breathe your native air as yet, for before that can be, you must all pay a visit to the realms of darkness, and learn from Tiresias what is to happen."

These words troubled Ulysses, and he asked Circe how he was to find his way down into those gloomy abodes of night.

She replied: "Spread your sail, and the north wind will waft you to a shore where the dark woods of Proserpine grow. There, when you leave your ship, you will find a gateway into the dismal pit, where is the flaming gulf of Acheron, and other dreadful things. There, having made certain offerings, a man will arise and tell you all you wish to know."

Next morning Ulysses left the enchanted island. Elpenor, who had drunk too much, was hardly sober when Ulysses called him, and he fell over a great cliff, and perished.

Saddened with this unfortunate accident, the crew was yet more sad when Ulysses told them with a grave face what was before them. They were to visit the dark forest of Proserpine; they were to tread the gloomy passage into the realms of night; and they were to hear from the grisly seer Tiresias all that was to befall them. The crew were filled with grief when they heard these tidings; but tears, says the poet, are but a vain remedy for mortal sorrows.

CHAPTER III.

THE DESCENT INTO HADES.

HAVING moored the ship, and taken ashore a black ram and other offerings, the Greeks soon found their way by a gloomy passage into Hades. Here Ulysses traced a trench in the black earth with his sword, and poured into it wine and milk and water, and then strewed flour on it. Other solemn rites were also paid, and the ram was slain, after which many pale phantoms appeared, — of youths and maidens and old people; of warriors and kings and statesmen; and after a while the stately form of the soothsayer Tiresias appeared.

Ulysses noticed among the phantoms the ghost of Elpenor, who had so lately fallen from the rocks and broken his neck. He implored Ulysses to see that his body had a peaceful grave, as soon as he could return to Circe's island, — a debt of friendship which Ulysses promised to pay. He then saw the shade of his own mother, Anticlea, and he wept at the sight. But he did not dare to accost her until he had spoken to Tiresias, who now approached with a golden staff in his hand.

"Why art thou here?" asked he, — "thou, a living man! Sheathe thy sword at once," continued Tiresias, "and I will tell you what awaits you."

Ulysses put up his sword, and stood waiting to hear his fate.

Tiresias told him of new dangers and new sorrows; and how the sea-god Neptune was angry because the Greeks had destroyed the eye-sight of the giant. He warned Ulysses as he sailed by Trinacria

to beware of touching the cattle which grazed there, for they were sacred to Apollo, and the most terrible vengeance would be sure to overtake anybody who meddled with the herds belonging to that god. Tiresias then told Ulysses what a riot was going on in his home during his absence; but, said he, you will some day set things right there, and punish the gluttons who are eating up your substance. Tiresias then said, "The way to propitiate Neptune is to find a people who have never yet heard of the sea. You must carry an oar on your back into this strange country; and when you meet a shepherd who thinks the oar a thing to winnow corn with, there you must fix the oar in the earth, and offer sacrifice. You must also remember to sacrifice to all the gods when you reach home, and you will after a long life die in honor."

Ulysses said he would do so. "But," added he, "why does not Anticlea speak to me, her son?"

"She cannot," replied Tiresias, "until she has tasted the blood."

With these words the soothsayer disappeared; and Anticlea, having drank the blood of the ram that had been sacrificed, began to ask why her son had come to that dismal place.

He answered: "I have come to ask Tiresias what is about to happen to me. But, Mother, how did you die? Was it by slow degrees or in a moment? And is my old father yet alive, and Telemachus, my son? And is my wife faithful to me yet?"

"She is indeed," replied Anticlea; "she mourns you absent, night and day. And Telemachus is all a father would wish a son to be, — hardy, temperate, self-denying, — but consumed with cares unsuited to his years. And as to myself," continued Anticlea, "I died of grief on your account. Nothing but that killed me."

Filled with a son's grateful love, Ulysses tried to throw his arms round his mother, but she slipped away like the wind. He was vexed at this, but Anticlea cried out, —

"It is ever so, my son, after the soul and body have parted com-

pany. But go, my son, and tell your wife what you have seen." With these words she disappeared, and other spirits in countless numbers gathered round the blood of the black ram, so that Ulysses was obliged to draw and flash his sword in their faces. But one after another the mighty dead arose to tell their deeds,—first, a number of once beautiful women, such as the haughty Antiope, the sullen Jocasta, the beauteous Chloris, Leda the fair, sad Ariadne, and others; and after them appeared the forms of heroes slain before Troy, chief among whom was Agamemnon, who told his own sad story,—how he was stabbed by a traitor over the hospitable cup, at the desire of his shameless wife.

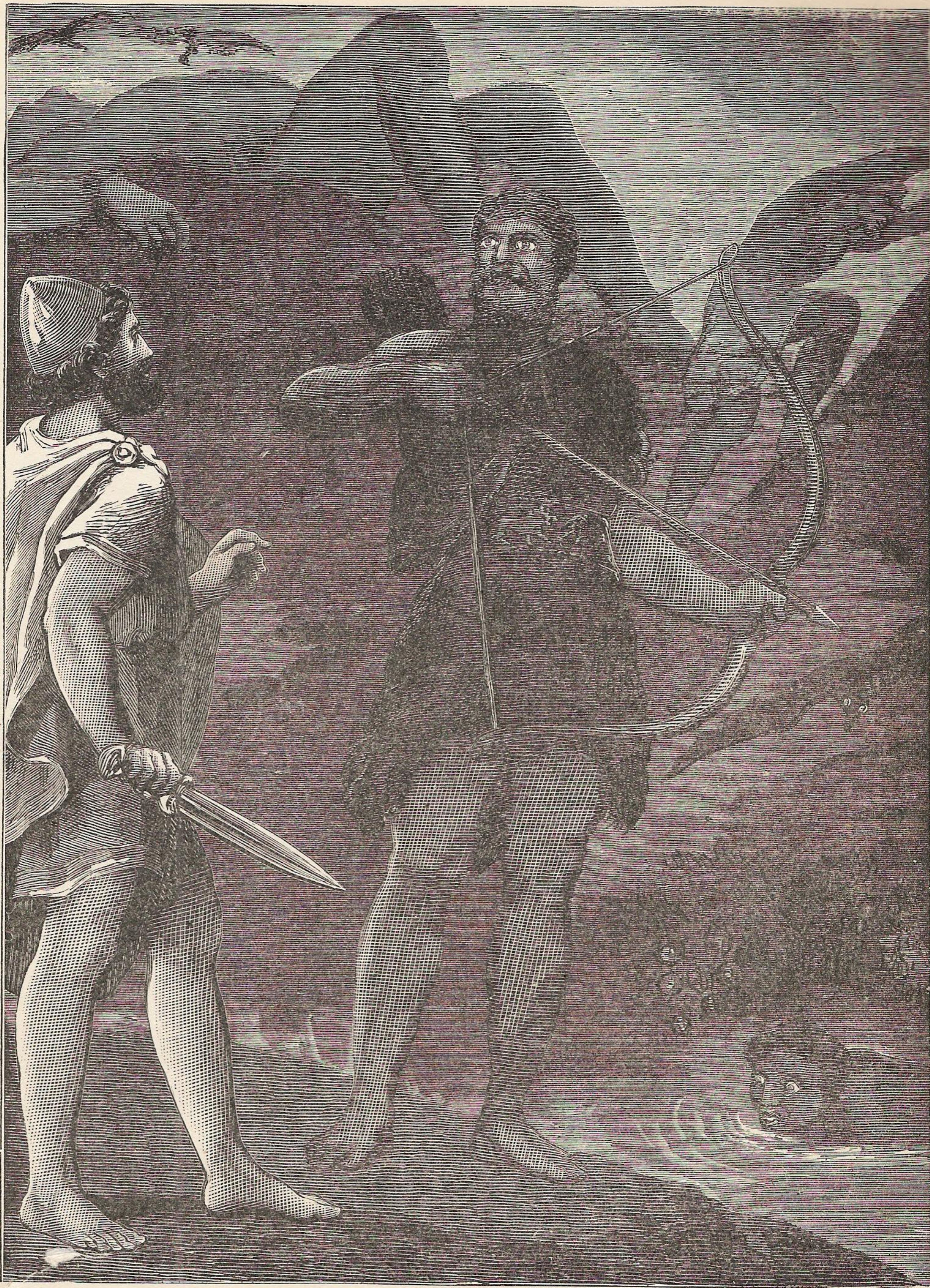
"You will see your son," said Agamemnon. "You left him an infant, and he is now a noble youth; but, alas for me! I never saw my Orestes. Can you tell me where he is?"

"I cannot," replied Ulysses. "I know not whether he is living or dead."

Then Agamemnon's ghost glided away, and those of Achilles, Patroclus, and Ajax, and others came near. Achilles asked Ulysses why he was there, and Ulysses told him, and called him by the title of king.

"Talk not of kings down here," said the heroic ghost; "and do not suppose vain words will make me feel any easier. I'd rather be a common ploughman on earth than wield a sceptre in this place. But tell me whether my son treads in his father's steps? Is he a brave man? And does my father Peleus still reign? Is he weak and old? Would that I could live again, to help him against his enemies, with this arm that was once so strong!"

Ulysses said he knew nothing of Peleus, but Achilles might rejoice at the wisdom and courage of his son, Neoptolemus, who, when enclosed in the belly of the wooden horse, showed more courage than all his comrades, the boldest of whom trembled. And when the wooden horse poured out its stream of armed men, none



ULYSSES SEEING THE SHADE OF HERCULES.

did braver deeds than Neoptolemus, and none received greater spoils, nor was any combatant more lucky, for he never got a scratch.

Achilles, having heard this very agreeable narrative, retired with a smile; and then came wandering by sullen Ajax, still grieving about the arms he might not have. He looked inexorable, and Ulysses tried to soothe his spirit, but to no purpose. When he entreated him for his own sake to lay aside his wrath, the haughty Ajax turned away without deigning to utter a single word. Ulysses would have followed him, and forced a reply from him, but he was arrested by other wonders. There he saw the giant hunter Orion, and the grisly forms of dogs and beasts he still pursued; and there he saw Tityus, who covered nine acres as he sprawled in chains and fed two vultures with his liver; there, too, was Tantalus, ever thirsty, and ever unable to drink, though close to water. There, too, Ulysses beheld Sisyphus, ever engaged in rolling a huge round stone up a mountain-side, which evermore, as he reached the top, thundered down again into the valley. And then he saw Hercules standing gloomily as though shooting with a bow and arrow; and he had on him a beautiful belt, adorned with golden images of lions and other creatures. Hercules addressed Ulysses, but stalked off without waiting for an answer; and our hero, fearful lest Gorgon should start up out of the lake, with her snaky curls, and turn him into stone, hastened to retrace his steps to the cheerful sunlight, and to leave the black forests and the dismal shore where he had seen and heard so many strange things.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SIRENS, SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS, AND THE SHIPWRECK.

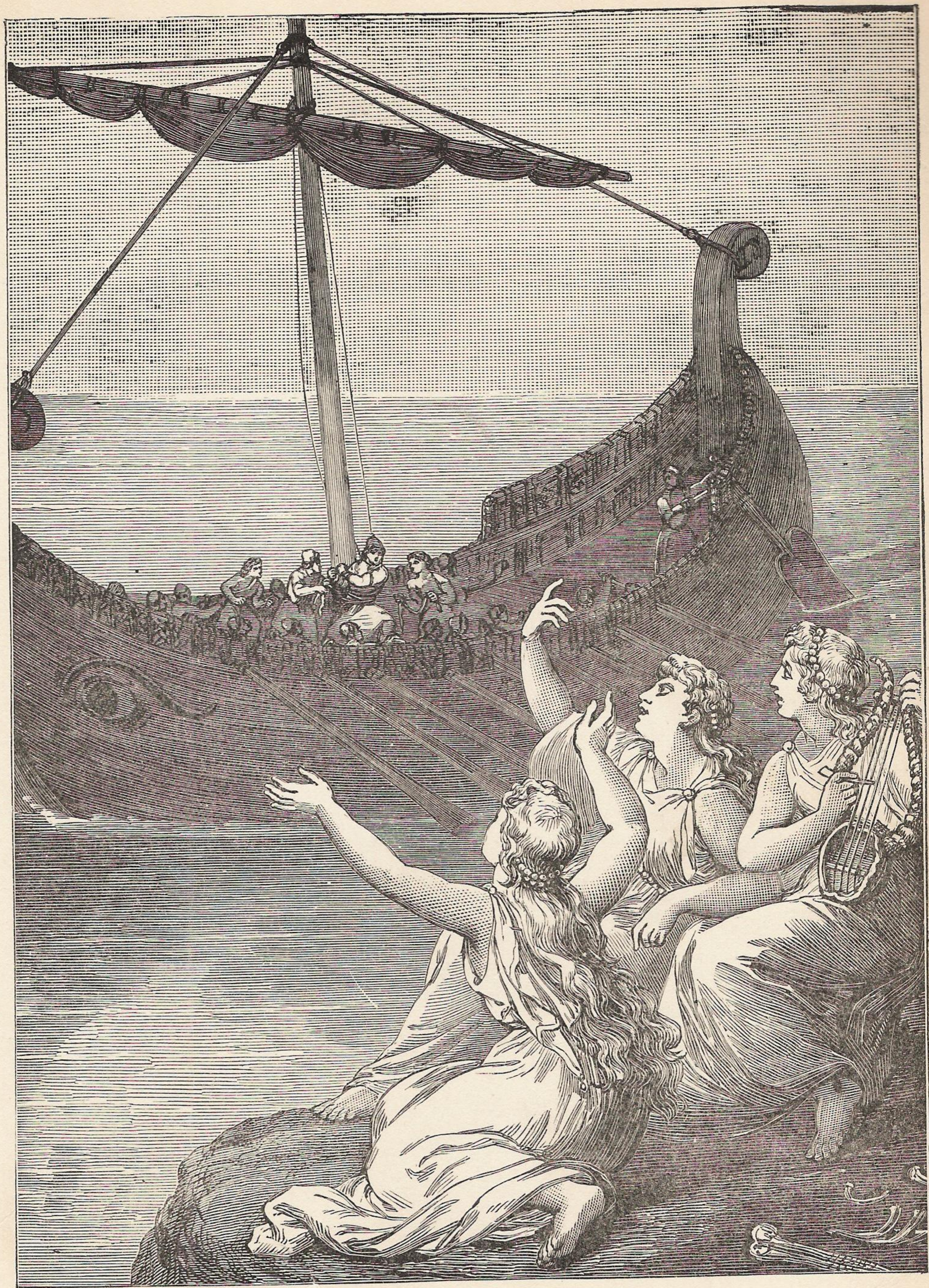
AS he emerged from the deep darkness of Hades, Ulysses could hardly bear the sunlight. Recovering his senses, he remembered that his unfortunate friend, Elpenor, still lay unburied. He ordered a pile of wood to be made, and Elpenor's body to be placed on the top. The pile was kindled, and very soon the Greek hero was nothing but a little heap of ashes. After this pious duty had been done, Circe and her maidens provided Ulysses and his companions with food and wine, and then warned them against the Sirens.

These were wicked women, who allured unwary men, by means of their beautiful songs, to land on their shore, and then murdered them. Circe also advised Ulysses to beware of the two monsters, Scylla and Charybdis.

Scylla was once a beautiful maiden, and was changed into a snaky monster by Circe. She dwelt in a cave high up on the cliff, whence she was accustomed to dart forth her long necks (for she had six heads), and in each of her mouths seize one of the crew of every vessel passing within reach. Charybdis was a maelstrom into which the water rushed thrice a day, and thrice was disgorged.

After Circe had conversed awhile with Ulysses, she left him, and he rejoined his comrades, and told them about the dangers to be feared from the sweet-voiced Sirens.

Ulysses wished to hear the Sirens sing, but he dared not allow any of the crew to enjoy the same privilege, lest evil should come of it. He had himself tied tightly to the mast with cords, and he said



THE SIRENS IMPLORING ULYSSES TO STAY.

to the sailors, "Now, if I entreat you to undo the bands, do not listen to me, but rather add more rope and more chains." Before he was tied to the mast, however, he poured a little wax into the ears of each person on board, except his own.

About this time, a strange lazy calm crept over the sea, and the air became very sultry, as if a storm were brooding. The sailors took to their oars, and urged the vessel on; and at length the dim outline of the Sirens' land was seen, and, not long after, the sweet but dangerous strains of the false singers were heard.

They implored Ulysses to stay, and be taught and charmed by them. They called him the pride of Greece and other fine names; and he was not able to resist the power of the sugared words. He burned to land and stay awhile with these charming songsters, and he struggled with all his might and main to free himself from the mast, to seize the rudder and steer for the land; but he could not burst his bonds, and when the sailors saw him writhing to be free, some of them rose up and bound him, as he had desired, with more ropes. And then, returning to their seats, they rowed harder than ever, so as to shoot past the dangerous island; and soon the sweet songs of the enchanting Sirens died away in the distance.

And now the lazy sea which spread itself around the Sirens' land was changed for one fearfully black and stormy. So awful did the watery waste look that the rowers ceased rowing, and every one's oar dropped from his trembling hands.

Ulysses tried to give them fresh courage. "Remember the cave of Cyclops," shouted he; "I led you safely out of that horrible place, and I will save you again if only you will attend to my advice."

He then directed the man at the helm to steer as much out of the maelstrom as possible. While Ulysses and his men watched with anxious eyes the dreadful whirlpool, they were not equally on their guard against an attack from Scylla; and the monster, darting forth her snaky heads, seized six of the men and bore them shrieking to her

den. Though Ulysses had been used to scenes of bloodshed, he never had seen a sight more dreadful, nor one which caused him so much horror.

Happily escaping from these scenes of terror and danger, the vessel which bore Ulysses and his Greeks sighted the shining hills of fair Sicily.

Soon they could espy the sheep and cattle of Apollo grazing in the rich green meadows. It was now that the cautious Ulysses remembered one of Circe's many warnings. "Beware," she had said, "of Apollo's wrath. If you meddle with his property, you die." Ulysses therefore implored his comrades to avoid the place, lest they should imprudently touch the herds of the sun-god, and die for their presumption.

Then Eurylochus burst into a great passion, and called Ulysses a cruel man, because he grudged his poor tired followers a brief rest on such happy-looking shores as those of Sicily. Ulysses thereupon unbent so far as to allow a short repose, but he warned them most solemnly against the sin of injuring aught that was Apollo's. Unfortunately, his warnings were unheeded; for while he was in a deep sleep, Eurylochus and the others slew some of the cattle, and had some roast beef.

When Ulysses awoke, he smelled the roast meat, and he at once knew that a fatal mistake had been made. All hope was now over, he was sure, at least for his foolish friends. They never would see their native land any more. For six days the impious men feasted on Apollo's roast beef and roast mutton, and on the seventh, when they were fairly out at sea, a fearful storm burst over their heads.

Before long, a blinding flash of lightning fell on the doomed ship and shivered it to atoms; and then and there all perished, — all except Ulysses, who contrived to tie himself to the mast, and who, after floating for ten days amid whirlpools and rolling billows, was laid by the sea waves, almost dead, on the island of Calypso.

CHAPTER V.

TELEMACHUS STARTS IN SEARCH OF HIS FATHER, ULYSSES.

SEA-GIRT Ithaca is forever linked with the famous name of Ulysses, wisest of the Greek heroes. During his long absence from that island it was governed by his wife, Penelope. Now, as the years sped on, and her husband did not return, numerous suitors applied to her, urging her to marry them, for they wished to share the throne of pleasant Ithaca. Penelope was obliged to entertain these troublesome men, and to put off the evil day of marriage as well as she was able. Ulysses and she had one son, named Telemachus, a youth of great beauty and promise, who regarded his mother's suitors with intense loathing.

Now, about seven weeks before Ulysses did at length return to his home, the goddess Minerva went to Ithaca disguised as a noble-looking man, and advised young Telemachus to go at once and seek his father. When the stranger approached the palace gate, the young prince arose and advanced toward her, to offer hospitality; for in those days people used to be very kind and generous to strangers. Telemachus relieved the goddess of her spear, led her to a comfortable seat, and placed a footstool under her feet. He then brought a golden jug full of water, and a basin of silver, in order that the traveller might remove the stains of her journey; and when that was done, a good meal was spread before her. While Minerva was resting, and refreshing herself, a crowd of hungry suitors rushed into the dining-hall, and began to feast gayly at the expense of the absent lord of Ithaca. This impudent conduct always stirred up the wrath of Telemachus, and he opened his sorrow to the stranger.

"These cormorants," said he, "are eating up my father's property. If he would but return, how rapidly would they hurry away! But, alas, he must be dead!" Then, turning to the disguised goddess, he said, "Do you know Ulysses? and if so, are you his friend?"

"Oh, I am a descendant of great Anchialus," replied the goddess, "and my name is Mentès. I have a ship, loaded with iron, at Reithrus, and I have just run over to see Ulysses, who is indeed a very old friend of mine." The goddess then continued, "I am sorry to find he has not yet reached his home; but do not despair; I feel sure he is alive, and it will not be long before he comes back. I knew you must be his son from the likeness you bear him."

"Yes, I am the son of Ulysses," replied Telemachus; "but I am not nearly so happy as many a one far more humbly born."

"Then who are these jovial fellows, who seem to have such excellent appetites?" asked the goddess.

"Oh, these are princes and lords from the neighboring islands, who desire to marry my mother. She pretends to listen favorably to every one, but she loathes them all the time."

"Heaven will help you, my friend," said the goddess. "Let but Ulysses show himself in that doorway, with a spear in either hand, and how soon will this scum of the earth disappear! Now, listen to the advice of your father's old friend. To-morrow, while it is yet early, call your own nobles together, and make such plans as seem best. Then set sail to Pylos in quest of Ulysses, and ask Nestor if he knows where he is likely to be. If you have good reason to suppose, after making due search, that your father is dead, return to Ithaca, and perform funeral rites; and then let your mother, the queen, be united to some one, the worthiest man you can find."

When the goddess had thus given her advice, she departed; and Telemachus went among the suitors, who were now amusing themselves by listening to the songs of the harper, Phemius. Penelope

cautioned the harper not to sing anything about Ulysses ; but her son told her that a harper was unable to choose his own subject, and so she had better retire and leave him to cope with the suitors, for he felt he had become a man since the visit of Minerva.

He therefore astounded them by ordering them all to quit the palace, and live no longer, like so many vile parasites, on his father.

The gay dandy Antinous answered Telemachus with derision, and Eurymachus replied to him with flattering words ; and thus matters ended for that day. But when the morrow came, the young prince called together the chief men of Ithaca ; and when he had taken his seat in his father's throne, a very old lord, named Ægyptius, got on his legs, saying, —

“ Why are we called together to-day ? ”

Telemachus, in reply, said, —

“ I have called you together to ask your advice. What am I to do ? My father's house is fairly eaten up by idle and greedy men. The royal herds can barely satisfy their appetites ; my father's vineyards can hardly quench their thirst. I now beseech you,” he continued, “ to help me to thrust out those worthless men from the island of Ithaca.”

When Telemachus had finished, he dashed the sceptre he held upon the earth, and sat, the very image of grief.

The saucy Antinous had come to the meeting ; and he rose up and blamed the trickery of Penelope, who gave hopes to each suitor, and yet deceived them all. He then advised Telemachus to consent to her marrying the man she fancied the best, and send her away with a dowry, and then he might enjoy his own house in peace.

“ And shall I thus requite a loving mother's care ? ” asked the young prince. “ How can I do so foul a deed as the one you suggest ? How heavy would be my father's vengeance, how bitter my mother's curse, were I to follow your vile counsel ! But now, I say, begone, ye robbers ! and waste your own goods, not ours. If you remain, you shall feel my vengeance, — that I swear ! ”

Just as Telemachus was speaking, two splendid eagles hovered over the assembly; and the soothsayer, Halitherses, at once arose, and declared that the eagles portended destruction to the suitors from the hands of Ulysses and Telemachus. The prophet, moreover, said he had foretold the misfortunes of Ulysses and his wanderings for twenty years, and now the twenty years were past, and the master's foot was at the door.

"Foolish old man!" said the suitor Eurymachus to the prophet, "I am not afraid. I don't mean to fly. I can read omens as well as you can, and better. Ulysses is dead as a door-nail. I wish you were as dead as he is. You are paid well to say what you do. We mean to remain here, all of us, as long as the queen remains; and Telemachus and you may say what you like."

"I have spoken my mind," replied the young prince, "and I leave my wrongs with Heaven and my countrymen. I mean now to go and look for my dear father. If I do not meet with him, I will return and celebrate his funeral rites, and my mother shall take another mate."

Then a very faithful old friend of Ulysses arose, a man named Mentor, — a friend indeed, as true as steel; and he said, —

"What use is it for a king to be good and just, since Ulysses was such a one, and he is forgotten? Where are your tongues and good feelings, ye men of Ithaca? Why do you not defend the interests of your absent lord?"

Leocritus, one of the Ithacan chiefs, then spoke, but he made a mean address. Its purport was to deter the people of Ithaca from abetting the cause of Ulysses, lest they should get the worst of it in the struggle.

The assembly then dispersed in a riotous fashion, and Telemachus betook himself to the beach, where he prayed to Minerva for her help and guidance. After this he went back to the palace, where the gay Antinous urged him to drive away dull care with mirth and the wine-cup.



COMBAT OF THE EAGLES.

"Is it a time for mirth?" asked the frowning youth; and turning on his heel, away he strode from the tempter's presence.

During his absence the suitors broke many a merry jest on him, little thinking of the awful fate they were preparing for themselves.

An old servant, named Euryclea, tried very hard to divert Telemachus from his purpose, telling him his father could not possibly be alive, and why need he perish also in a bootless voyage on the stormy sea? But all she got was, "Heaven calls me to go, and go I must. Yet, Euryclea, be sure to keep my going a secret from my dear mother, at least for twelve days, lest the grief of my departure be too much for her."

The goddess Minerva then descended once more, and took Mentor's likeness; and she did much to further the voyage which she had advised, stowing the ship's hold with stores, shoving her keel from the shore, and causing a favorable breeze to waft her out to sea.

CHAPTER VI.

TELEMACHUS AT THE COURT OF MENELAUS.

WISE old Nestor, having safely survived the perils of land and sea, had returned to Pylos, and was ruling his people there with prudence and piety; and when Telemachus arrived at his court, he found the aged king and his sons busily engaged in offering sacrifice to Neptune, the god of the ocean.

When the sacred rites were ended, the old man asked Telemachus who he was, and what he wanted.

"I am Telemachus, son of Ulysses," said the young stranger, "and I am seeking my father, who has been long away from home."

In reply to this, Nestor, with an old man's fondness for talking about the past, related many stirring events of the memorable Trojan War. He spoke of Ulysses as a bosom friend, and as having been superior to all the other Greek leaders in shrewdness; and he advised Telemachus to imitate Orestes, who slew the murderer of his father Agamemnon.

After a long conversation the young Ithacan was lodged in Nestor's palace; and the next day he purposed to go on to Sparta to ask Menelaus whether he knew anything about his father.

When the early morning came, old Nestor arose, and sat on a polished stone hard by his palace gate; and his sons stood round about him awaiting his orders. These being given, the young men bestirred themselves to prepare a religious sacrifice (for the Greeks were then a very pious people), and to enjoy a feast afterward of flesh and wine.

When this was ended, the king bade his sons put horses to the chariot which was to convey his guest from Pylos to Sparta; and Pisistratus, one of Nestor's sons, went with Telemachus.

When they arrived at Sparta, they were very kindly treated by Menelaus. They had arrived at a fortunate moment. They found the king and his friends in the midst of festivities, for the wedding of Hermione was being solemnized. Hermione, the loveliest maiden in the world, was being sent in a grand gilded chariot to her affianced husband, the son of great Achilles. A harper was harping and singing, and youths were dancing, and "all went merry as a marriage bell," when the two young princes rolled into the palace court.

The seneschal Eteoneus feared that the presence of the two strangers might be unwelcome; but his master rebuked him for suggesting such a thing, and bade him show them all the kindness he was able.

After the two young men had removed the dust of travel, they were conducted to a splendid banqueting-hall, and refreshed with food and drink.

Telemachus was struck with wonder at the profusion of gold, ivory, and amber, and other costly things which he saw; and he whispered to his comrade, "Can heaven itself be a more splendid place?" Menelaus happened to overhear the remark, and he said it was impious to contend with Jove, and as for all his riches and splendor, he thought them dearly purchased by his sorrows. He then went on to describe those sorrows and toils and wanderings, and the dying of so many brave men in his cause; and then he alluded in many touching words to Ulysses, and the cloud which overhung his house in Ithaca.

While Menelaus was speaking about Ulysses, Telemachus covered his weeping eyes with his purple robe; and while he was thus veiled, in stepped Helen,—the woman whose fatal beauty had caused the deaths of so many valiant heroes at Troy. She was attended by

a bevy of fair maidens, — some carrying perfumes, others a carpet and a chair for their delicate mistress. Last of all came Phylo, with Helen's golden distaff and fleece of purple silk for spinning.

Helen sat down in her own special chair, and then inquired who the two strangers were. "I believe that one," said she, pointing to Telemachus, "is a son of Ulysses."

"You are right," replied her husband, "for not only is he the very image of Ulysses, but when I began to describe that great wanderer's sorrows, he shed tears, and covered his face with his mantle."

"Yes," assented Pisistratus, "it is the son of Ulysses, sure enough. I came with him here at my father's request; and he wishes to ask thy advice and help in finding his lost parent."

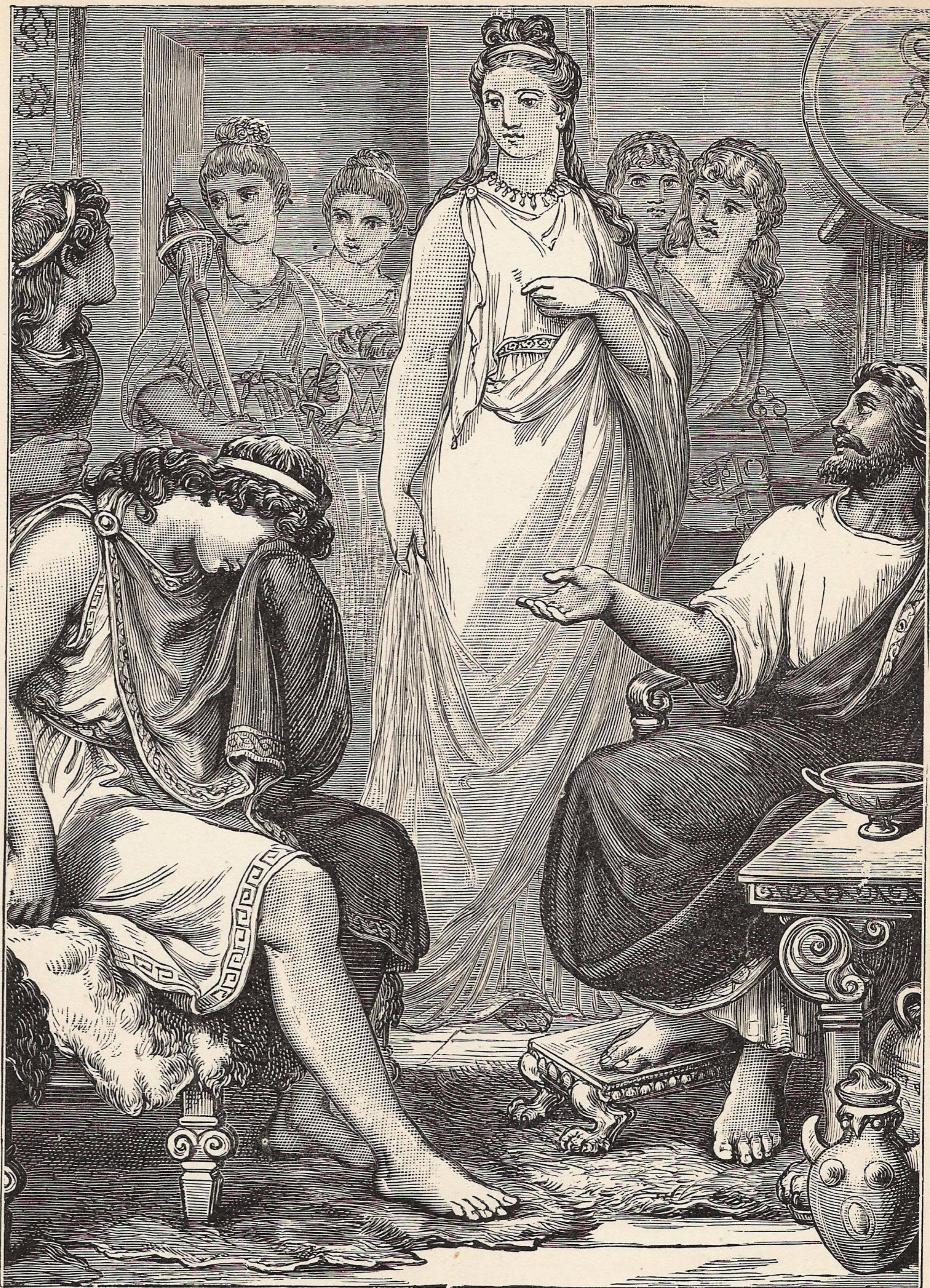
"And no one did I ever love better than Ulysses," said Menelaus. "I prepared for him a home at Argos as a proof of my gratitude for his services; but some power greater than my own has interposed, and Ulysses is perhaps no longer alive!"

The thought of Ulysses dead made Menelaus weep; and as weeping is contagious, Helen and the others wept also.

Pisistratus was the first to recover his cheerfulness. He bade Menelaus refrain, as tears were not seasonable in the evening, which, as it is the time for feasting, is also a time for joy and thanksgiving. "Let each man deplore his dead in the morning," said he, "and then will I shed tears for Antilochus, my dear dead brother!"

"You are a wise youth," remarked the king; "you speak as if your father's mantle had fallen on you. Happy is Nestor in having such bold and prudent sons!"

Helen now ordered a curious drink to be prepared, which a queen of Egypt had taught her how to compound. When the cup was ready for the assembled guests, she said that she would tell them about Ulysses, who, wounded and in rags, entered Troy, and took careful notice of everything which might assist the Greeks in its capture.



TELEMACHUS AT THE PALACE OF MENELAUS.

She, being then inside its walls, recognized the disguised spy, and assisted him to return in safety to the Greeks.

"Yes," said Menelaus, "Ulysses was indeed a general without an equal. How wonderfully he played his part when we were shut up inside the wooden horse! How nearly we had betrayed ourselves, but how firm he was on that occasion!"

After some talk, the princes retired to rest.

In the morning, Menelaus asked Telemachus why he had come to Sparta.

"I came to ask whether you knew anything of my father," replied the prince. "A number of insolent fellows are eating us up at my home, each pretending to aspire to the hand of my mother, and to lord it over Ithaca. Do, pray, if you can, tell me where my father is, and be not afraid of giving me pain, if you must needs do it."

Menelaus replied that while some of the brave Greeks had fallen by treachery, such as Agamemnon and Achilles, another, — namely, Ulysses, — was a miserable exile in a far-away land, the survivor of incredible sorrows. He had learned from a prophet that Ulysses was now confined in the cave of Calypso, his ships at the bottom of the sea, his beloved comrades dead, his cheek blanched with grief and blasted hopes; "while I," continued Menelaus, — "I am happy, with joys ever young, and my fields ever white with daisies. So capricious a jade is Fortune!"

Having given Telemachus some advice, the king presented to him three chariot-horses, and a handsome chariot, together with a large golden cup. The prince gratefully received the cup, but he restored the horses and chariot to the kind donor; for, said he, "we have no use for such things in our rocky island."

"Why, you are as wise as your father!" said Menelaus; "but if you won't have the chariot and horses, you shall have a silver urn instead, which the King of Sidon gave me one day." And then, after a parting meal, the friends separated, mutually pleased with each other.

When the suitors learned what Telemachus had done, they agreed to take away his life when he returned. The news of this plot, and of her son's absence, came to the ears of Penelope, and she was so horror-stricken that she fell on the earth amid her weeping servants. When she came to her senses, she cried, —

“Were ever any sorrows like mine? My lord is lost, and now my son is gone away! Why did you all hide from me his intention of leaving Ithaca?”

“I knew it,” said Euryclea, “but I was bound by oath to secrecy. Come, Mistress, put your trust in the gods, and all will come right yet.”

So Penelope dried her eyes, and went to the temple to pray, while twenty bold ruffians put to sea to murder Telemachus if they could.

That night a pleasant dream cheered Penelope's soul. Her sister Iphthima appeared, and reproved her for weeping, and bade her have confidence in the gods.

Much comforted by this vision, the queen found herself smiling with new hope when she awoke; and she went about the duties and employments of the day with a cheerful heart.

CHAPTER VII.

ULYSSES AT THE ISLAND OF CALYPSO.

WE must now return to Ulysses. The gods had resolved, in council sitting, that the time had arrived for the deliverance of Ulysses from the island of Calypso, where he had been a captive for seven long and weary years.

Great Jove despatched Mercury to the island; and the god, having bound the golden pinions to his feet, sped over the world of waters to the shore, where he alighted, and took the path to Calypso's cave. She was a fair-haired being, more than mortal. Had she been cast in human mould, Ulysses would not have been detained so long by her means. She was singing at her work when Mercury arrived, and the cave was perfumed with blazing cedar-wood and incense. The cave was prettily situated among plantations of trees, where all sorts of birds made their nests, and sang among the branches. The sound of rippling brooks, too, made a melodious murmur, and kept the soft grassy meadows as green as spring all the year round.

Mercury noted all the beauties of this sylvan paradise with much approval; and then he entered the cave, and was recognized at once by Calypso. Ulysses was not within. He was wandering moodily, as was his wont, by the sad sea waves, and longing, as he often had longed before, for the wings of a dove, that he might fly to his beloved wife and son, and be at rest.

Calypso asked Mercury why he had honored her with a visit, and expressed herself willing to do all he required. She then placed

before him refreshments, in the form of ambrosial cakes and ruby-colored nectar, which his long journey made very acceptable.

"I am come hither at Jove's behest," replied the god. "I have not come to please myself, but because I dare not disobey the orders of my superior. It is said you have a man living in your island, — a man the most miserable of all men, one who has lost his ships and all his comrades. This man must return to his home. Jove has said it; and it must be done."

Calypso broke out into a great passion, and inveighed bitterly against the gods, as beings who were always envious of other people's happiness.

"I rescued this man," said she, "from the stormy waves; and I have fed him and taken care of him. But of course if Jove wills it, he must leave me. Yet how? for I have neither ship nor sailor."

"Well," repeated Mercury, "allow the man to go as he can best go, and do not brave the terrible anger of Jove."

Having said this, he once more took wing, and was out of sight in an instant. Calypso lost no time in seeking Ulysses, whom she found pacing in deep thought up and down the beach.

"Unhappy man," said she, "you are at liberty to form a raft and leave this island as soon as you like. I will store it with bread and wine, and fill its sail with a favorable wind."

Ulysses was at first afraid she meant him some mischief; and he would not believe she was in earnest for his good until she had taken her oath that she meant all in kindness.

Smiling, and grasping him by the hand, Calypso swore by earth and heaven and by the river Styx that she meant no harm, but all good to him. She then led the way to the cave, where a rich repast was prepared, and when that was ended, she tried to persuade Ulysses to remain; but he replied that he was languishing for home, where he wished to die when his time came.

Next morning he took an axe and went to the forest, where he



ULYSSES SHIPWRECKED ON THE COAST OF PHÆACIA.

soon felled trees enough for his purpose. Four days were employed in making the raft; and on the fifth day, having victualled his craft, our hero spread his sail, and said farewell to Calypso and her island.

Ulysses steered by means of those splendid constellations we know so well, — Orion, the Great Bear, and the Pleiades. For seventeen days and nights was he sailing over the sea, and on the eighteenth day he sighted the wooded mountains of Phæacia. Neptune, who owed him a grudge, now stirred up a great tempest, which made the huge waves sweep over the raft and break the mast. Then came a monstrous billow, which fell on the raft and broke it to shivers; but Ulysses got astride of a beam, and pulling off his clinging vest, bound a scarf about him. For two days he was "in the deep;" and on the third day he was cast on a wild, rocky shore, wounded and half dead. He found a shady nook, into which he crept; and lying down among some dry leaves, he fell into the deepest sleep that he had ever known.

He had been cast upon the shore of Phæacia, where Alcinous was king. Nausicaa, the king's daughter, was directed by a dream to go to the little rivulet which flowed by the lurking-place of Ulysses, and there to wash her state robes, as a preparation for her wedding-day.

She obeyed the directions given her in the dream; and she, with her maidens, drove down to the seaside, and washed the robes, after which they ate and drank, and played at ball, and sang songs. Nausicaa threw the ball at one of the maidens; but it missed its mark and fell into the river, at which all the maidens shouted loudly, and the noise aroused the sleeper in the thicket.

Starting from his sleep, Ulysses began to think that he was cast on some inhospitable shore; but resolved to know the cause of the noise he heard, he broke off branches of the shrubs, and fastening them around him, issued from the thicket. At the sight of his strange figure, clothed in leaves, and his face, covered with the salt

ooze of the ocean, the maidens fled away, shrieking, to hide themselves. But the princess had more courage, and stood her ground; and to her Ulysses told his piteous story, and begged her protection.

Nausicaa was moved to compassion for the stranger, and calling her maidens back, upbraided them for their cowardice in being afraid of a poor shipwrecked man, and directed them to bring food for him, and lay some clothing beside a secluded stream, where he washed and dressed himself.

Then having invited him to her father's house, the princess returned with her chariot, mules, and maidens. When she reached her palace gate, her brothers took from her the newly washed robes and unharnessed the slow-footed steeds. Such were the simple manners of those olden times!

Meanwhile, Ulysses, enveloped in a mist by Pallas, took the winding road to the city. When he first saw its walls and towers, he met a damsel who was carrying a polished urn.

"Will you please tell me the way to the king's palace?" said Ulysses; "for I am a stranger here."

"I will gladly show you the way," replied the maiden; "but please do not speak to any one we may happen to meet. Our people are rugged and clownish, and do not like strangers."

So saying, the damsel turned, and led the way to the palace of Alcinous.

Ulysses gazed about with surprise and admiration at the streets and docks and ships. The houses of the merchants were lofty and grand; and each one stood with a moat round about it.

At length he stood before the palace of the king.

"Here," said the kind and obliging maiden who had been his guide, "my task ends. Fear not, but be brave. You will find Queen Arete very good. Tell her all your wishes, and she will help you; for she is a merciful woman, and in blessing others, is blessed herself."

CHAPTER VIII.

ULYSSES AT THE COURT OF PHÆACIA.

AS he halted awhile before the palace gate, Ulysses much admired all he saw. The palace shone brightly, for it was made of brass, with a cornice as blue as the sky. The doors were plated with gold plates, and on either side were rows of stately mastiffs, some of gold and some of silver, which Vulcan himself had made for the palace of Alcinous. Within, there were splendid seats, or rather thrones, to sit upon, and beautiful carpets for the feet; and here a succession of princely guests were hospitably entertained day by day. Golden figures of boys, holding torches in their hands, stood on pedestals around the hall of feasting. A large garden, hedged round by a fence of evergreens, surrounded the palace. Here grew fruit-trees of many kinds,—apples, figs, pomegranates, and vines in great profusion. Two fountains threw up their crystal jets; and after enriching the garden, the bright waters flowed out and served the town.

The wanderer, still enveloped in his cloak of mist, entered the palace, and went direct to the throne of Alcinous, where he cast himself as a suppliant on the ground. At this moment the veil dropped from him. He at once directed his looks and words to the queen, as he had been advised; and he implored her to take pity on him as a miserable exile. So saying, he went to the fireplace, and seated himself among the ashes, such being the custom of suppliants in those days.

“It is not meet and right,” said the old Echeneus, after a silence, “to allow a stranger to remain seated in those ashes. It is an act worthy of a king to uplift a lowly suppliant from the ground.”

When Alcinous had heard these words, he went to the hearth and raised Ulysses, and led him to a chair on which Laodamas, his son, had been sitting. Ulysses was then hospitably entertained with meat and drink; and when he was refreshed, the king observed that it was now time for rest, but that early on the morrow he would advise his lords to consult as to what was the best course to take about the suppliant who had so strangely sought his protection.

"But," said he, looking fixedly at Ulysses, "if you are a god, your coming hither must surely portend some great event."

"No god am I," replied Ulysses, "but a mortal man like yourself. I am only distinguished among other men by a long sad train of sorrows, having been tossed about from one shore to another. But pray help me as you propose; and I on my part am ready to do or bear anything, so long as I may see once more my native land and those I love so well there."

When the lords and ladies had retired to rest, Ulysses remained behind to talk awhile with King Alcinous and Queen Arete. The latter asked him whence he came, and how it was he was dressed in those robes; and then he opened his lips, and told her about Calypso and his late voyage on the raft from her island, and all about the fearful storm, and the loss of his raft, and his own escape from imminent peril, and all the rest of his adventures with Nausicaa and her maidens.

"But why did not my daughter convey you herself to the palace?" asked the king.

"She wished me to follow in her train," replied Ulysses; "but I did not venture to do so, for fear you might suspect me of wishing to do the princess some wrong."

"No fear of that, I believe," said the king. "But were it so, I should not be unwilling to call a man like you my son-in-law. However, if you wish to go, go you shall; for Jupiter bids us speed the parting guest."

Ulysses was then led to his bedroom, where he no doubt enjoyed the luxury of rest, made doubly precious by his late anxious voyage.

The day broke; and King Alcinous called his privy councillors together, to consult about Ulysses and his return to Ithaca. In this he was aided by Minerva, who, in the guise of a herald, went from lord to lord, and urged them to attend a very important meeting. When all were in their places, Alcinous arose and said, —

“Lords of the council, a noble stranger craves your help. He has been cast by the waves on our shores, and it is our duty to help him.”

The king's advice was well received; and in a very short time a vessel was got ready, and manned for a voyage with able-bodied sailors. But before she hoisted her sails, a great feast was held in the palace in honor of Ulysses, at which the famous bard Demodocus was present. He sat on a throne of pure silver, for he was held in very great honor, and he had an attendant to hold his lyre, and a table all to himself, with plate, knife, fork, and cup.

When all had eaten and drunk enough, the bard took his lyre from the attendant, and sang in a loud voice about the great deeds of great men. When he alluded to the war at Troy, and sang about the quarrel between Achilles and Ulysses, the latter hid his face in the folds of his purple robe and wept bitterly.

The guests admired the song so much that they got the bard to repeat it, and again Ulysses groaned with anguish behind his purple garment. Alcinous noticed with some curiosity the emotion of the stranger, and entreated the harper to stop singing.

“Come,” said he, “let us go into the open air, and have some sports and games, that our stranger guest may carry away with him a pleasant remembrance of our country.”

So they all went out, the king leading the way. A great throng was soon collected, all anxious to witness the sports. There was the race for the swift, the leaping match for the agile, the wrestling for the strong, and the throwing of the discus, or quoit. When much of this

sort of thing had been gone through, one of the youths, named Euryalus, called to Ulysses, and said, —

“Will not you, sir, contend for a prize?”

Ulysses replied, “I am a sad and afflicted man, and I have merely come hither to ask the kind aid of your king to further me to my own land.”

Upon this Euryalus, in a saucy humor, said he supposed Ulysses was little better than a trader, who feared a manly race or a wrestle on the green.

“You are quick to proclaim yourself unwise,” retorted Ulysses, with a frown. “I am skilled in all these exercises, and I held a post of honor among the best of men when I was young and vigorous; but now I am full of cares, and my strength is impaired by sorrow. Yet what I am still, I will show you, as you seem to doubt my words.”

So saying, he wrenched a fragment of rock from the ground, where it lay imbedded, and hurled it, to the huge astonishment of the saucy Euryalus, far beyond the farthest throw that had been made that afternoon.

“Now, Phæacians, try your luck against my cast,” cried Ulysses. “If your best thrower can equal that, I will engage to hurl the quoit still farther. Or if any will run a race or try a fall with me, I am his man!”

“Your words are warm,” observed the king, “but they give us no offence. But come, herald, off to the house and fetch us a lyre, so that we may end our games with some dancing.” The lyre was soon brought; a place was staked out in the sand and levelled; and a number of tall youths began to dance. Their agile movements greatly amazed Ulysses; and then while they rested, the bard resumed his songs; and when he had paused, the dancing went on again. So light and airy were the movements of the dancers that scarcely any marks were to be seen in the sand.

Ulysses was much pleased with this wonderful dancing; and he



ULYSSES ASTONISHES THE PHÆACIANS.

complimented the king on having such clever people among his subjects. The king smiled pleasantly, and bade his princes give the stranger some token of their regard; he also told Euryalus that he must make an apology for his rude speech. Euryalus readily did so, and, moreover, offered Ulysses a handsome sword with a hilt of silver, and encased in an ivory sheath.

"May the whirlwinds carry away my impudent words from thy mind," said he, "and mayst thou soon be restored to thy native land!"

"And may you never need this sword!" was the kind answer of Ulysses to the other's polite gift and speech.

When this was over, he was led to the palace; and having bathed and anointed his limbs, he sat down to a splendid feast.

"When you return to Ithaca, do not forget me," said the Princess Nausicaa.

"Royal maiden, I never will," replied Ulysses.

And so the feast went on, all in a good humor; and Ulysses sent the bard Demodocus a plate of meat, cut up with his own hands. This was considered a very great honor in those days. And then Ulysses requested the bard to sing about the introduction of the wooden horse into Troy. As he sang the stirring tale, the wanderer began to weep again, and again the king noticed his sorrow.

Having ordered Demodocus to stop singing, the king straitly asked Ulysses who he was, and whence he came.

CHAPTER IX.

ULYSSES' RETURN TO ITHACA.

WHEN Ulysses had finished his story, he bade his hospitable friends farewell, and turned his steps toward Ithaca. Leaving Phæacia in the evening, about sunset, he reached his own beloved island next day. While yet the morning star was shining, the mariners could discern Ithaca like a cloud upon the waters. Ulysses was so overcome with sleep that he had to be carried on shore, and placed, yet dreaming, under the shadow of a wild olive-tree near the shore. By his side the sailors laid the gifts of King Alcinous; and when they had done this, they turned the vessel round, and went back to Phæacia, for they were afraid lest they should receive harm as the friends of Ulysses.

Neptune went and complained to Jove of the good fortune which Ulysses had enjoyed; and Jove, being pressed, granted Neptune permission to wreak his vengeance on the vessel which had carried our hero to Ithaca. In consequence of this, the ship was converted in one instant into a rock. This miracle awed Alcinous and his people; and they at once sacrificed oxen and made their peace, as well as they could, with the angry deity. "And," said the king, "let us take care and not meddle any more with strangers, or we may get into trouble!"

When Ulysses awoke from his long, long sleep, he did not in the least know where he was. All he saw was an unknown land, and "unknown mountains crowned with unknown woods." "Where am

"I?" asked he of himself. "How foolish was I to ask Alcinous to send me to Ithaca! That faithless king has sent me to some barbarous shore. O ye gods, how very few men speak the truth!"

Ulysses then counted up his treasures and found them all correct; and having nothing else to do, he began to sigh once more for his dear native land.

While he was thus engaged, the goddess Pallas stood before him like a young countryman, with spear in hand and sandals on his feet.

"Pray, will you tell me, young sir, what country this is?" asked Ulysses of the young man.

"And pray who may you be, that does not know our country?" asked Pallas, in return. "It is a fertile island, though somewhat rough and uneven to look at. Surely Ithaca is known as well as Troy, is it not?"

When Ulysses knew he was really in Ithaca, he fell into transports of joy. But he was too cunning to let his gladness appear, and he merely said in a cold way, —

"Oh, yes, I have often heard people talking about this island. I am a Cretan born, and I was one of those who fought at Troy, but I was one of the unfortunate ones, and am even now an unlucky exile."

Suddenly, the countryman was turned into a beautiful goddess. She smiled, and said, —

"Still the same Ulysses, artful as ever! Do you not know me, — me, who have cared for you through ten years of war and ten of wandering?"

Ulysses answered, "I have lost sight of you for the last ten years. It is true you protected me while we waged war against Troy; but I have never seen you since that city was taken. But do, pray, tell me, is this indeed Ithaca, my native land?"

"Wise men are always quick to doubt and hard to be convinced," replied the goddess. "But look around you, and I think you will recognize some old familiar spots." So saying, she pointed out several

landmarks, such as the Port of Phorcys, the cave of the Nereides, and the mountain Neritos.

Something like a mist was in a moment cleared away from the king's eyes; and at a glance he recognized his home. Falling on his knees, he saluted his mother earth, and devoutly thanked the powers above for his safe return. By Minerva's help, he then deposited his treasures in a cave for safety, and the goddess rolled a stone to the doorway of the cave. After this, she gave Ulysses some directions. "First," said she, "you must rid the land of the suitors, who for three years have led a lawless life in this island."

"If thou wilt be my helper," replied Ulysses, "I will clear Ithaca of all these robbers, even though a hundred were to oppose me."

"I will be with thee," replied the goddess. "But for the present, it will be well for thee to go disguised." So saying, she turned Ulysses into a miserable-looking old man. "Now," said she, "go to your chief herdsman, who is an honest fellow; you will find him near the fountain Arethusa. I must go to Sparta, for I have some business in that city."

So saying, the goddess touched Ulysses with her wand, and a strange change at once came over him. His robe was tattered; his skin grew full of wrinkles; his hair was grizzled, his eyes were dim, and his staff could hardly support his trembling limbs. In this disguised state Ulysses sauntered slowly across the mountains and through the thickets, toward the dwelling-place of his faithful herdsman, Eumæus, whom he found, diligent as ever, looking after his master's interests. Four savage dogs began to bark furiously as Ulysses approached. He at once flung down his staff, and quietly sat down, to disarm the wrath of the dogs; and Eumæus himself, seeing it was an infirm old man, strode forth and drove off the brutes with a shower of stones.

"I should have been deeply grieved," said the herdsman to Ulysses, "if thou hadst been torn to pieces at my gate. I have sorrows enough



ULYSSES DISGUISED AS AN OLD BEGGAR-MAN.

to trouble me without that, for I constantly mourn my dear absent master, and have the bitterness of seeing his house eaten up by a pack of worthless wretches. But come in, old man, and sit down in my easy-chair, and partake of the best my house affords. Where do you come from, I wonder, and what share have you had in the troubles of which man's life is so full ? ”

“ May the gods bless you, kind man ! ” said Ulysses, fervently, as he sank on a bed of rushes.

“ Well,” observed Eumæus, “ I never yet despised a poor man. I cannot do as much good to my fellows as I would ; for I am but a very poor man myself, merely a servant. Our good master is kept away from us by some hard fate, and he may be dead for all we know. Perish that woman Helen's accursed name, who brought us so much woe ! ”

Having uttered this imprecation, the old herdsman hurried away to get his guest some dinner. When Ulysses had satisfied his appetite, he said to Eumæus, —

“ And who is this absent master you talk so much about ? ”

“ The best man that ever lived,” answered the herdsman. “ He was dearer to me than even my father and mother ; but he must be dead, alas, alas ! and I shall never see him again ! ”

“ Oh, keep on hoping,” replied the other. “ I believe so good a man will not die before he has seen his home again. The gods will not allow it. He will come back, if it were only to punish the wretches who have wronged him.”

Eumæus shook his head ruefully. “ It is not much use for you to talk about dead men returning home,” said he. “ Better think of things we really have, and make the best of them. No, no ; Ulysses will never come back, I believe ; and I am now troubled about his son, Telemachus, who went some time back to look after his father, and he will perhaps share his fate. But come, old man, satisfy my curiosity by telling me who you are and whence you came.”

Not willing yet to make himself known to his faithful old servant, Ulysses spun a long rambling yarn, which we need not here go into; and when he had ended it, Eumæus said, —

“ Well, your sorrows have made me sad; but what you say about Ulysses being yet in the land of the living I cannot believe. No, old man, our lord is dead; and much I wish he had died gloriously in the field of battle. Many think he is still living, but I have no faith in their opinions; and I hope you are not telling me lies, to raise my hopes.”

“ Well,” replied Ulysses, “ I will make a bargain with you. If your missing lord returns, you shall give me a tunic and vest; and if you never see him again, I will give you leave to push me over the brow of yon dreadful precipice.”

“ Bless me!” said the startled herdsman, “ I would not do that. I would not for any money stain my hearth with the blood of a man I had been kind to. But come, it is time to have our supper.”

Then — for those were hospitable days — the fattest pig was slaughtered, in honor of the old beggar-man’s visit, and its chine, as the most approved portion, was roasted and set smoking before him.

“ May you ever be dear to mighty Jove!” said the grateful guest, as he enjoyed his excellent supper.

Eumæus made a suitable reply; and then, as it was growing late, they retired to rest. The night had become very stormy and cold, and Ulysses, growing talkative as he lay on his comfortable bed of rushes, began to chatter about a very bitter cold night he had once spent on the plain of Troy, when, one of a party, he shivered without a cloak, — “ the only fool,” said he, “ who had left his cloak behind him.” This was meant as a hint that Eumæus might supply his guest with an extra blanket. This was given him by his good-natured entertainer; and under the cover of it, Ulysses enjoyed a very cosy night’s rest.

CHAPTER X.

THE RETURN OF TELEMACHUS AND HIS MEETING WITH ULYSSES.

MINERVA, it must be remembered, left Ithaca to look after Telemachus. She found the young man awake, but not yet out of bed. Nestor's son lay slumbering by his side; but as for Telemachus, care would not suffer him to sleep.

"Up and away!" said the goddess; "you have tarried here long enough,—indeed, too long. Beware of those false suitors! they are even now plotting your death. Hence, then, to Ithaca this moment; and when thou reachest the island, seek out thy father's herdsman, and bid him go and tell thy mother Penelope that thou art safe and sound."

The goddess then disappeared, and Telemachus aroused his sleeping comrade at once.

"I must be off immediately," said he to Nestor's son.

"You won't think of going," said Pisistratus, raising himself up in bed, "without bidding my father good-by, surely! You must also wait and receive his presents,—presents which will show your children what dear friends you and my father were."

Not long afterward, Menelaus appeared, and Telemachus spoke earnestly to him of his desire to return home as soon as possible.

Menelaus said, "It is our duty to speed the parting guest, as well as to bid the coming one welcome." He then ordered the presents to be brought and given to the young prince. Telemachus said he was sorry to leave so pleasant a place, but business of the highest importance called him away.

"Well," replied the king, "if it be so, you must leave us; and may mighty Jove prosper you!"

Helen came forth from her chamber, and offered Telemachus a veil, richly embroidered by her own delicate fingers. She said, "It will do well for your bride, when you find one."

After some other ceremonies and favorable signs granted by Jove, Pisistratus and his young friend stepped into the chariot, and drove off to Pylos, where a vessel was waiting to carry the son of Ulysses back to his native land.

While the ship was being carried swiftly through the waters with a favorable breeze at its back, Ulysses himself was spending the day with the herdsman Eumæus. In the course of their conversation, Ulysses, still disguised as an old beggar-man, asked his host to let some one show him the way to the palace, where he thought he could amuse some of the idle courtiers with stories about the wanderings of Ulysses, and make himself otherwise useful.

"How can you wish to do such a thing, old man?" asked Eumæus, with great surprise. "If you venture to go among those wicked idlers, you will be killed outright. They don't want people like you to amuse them and wait on them. No, my good fellow, stop here where you are welcome and comfortable, at least until my young master Telemachus returns. Then, if you like it, he will be able to show you the palace, and perhaps find you some suitable employment."

"May Jove reward you!" exclaimed the old beggar. "Surely, of all the miserable lives that are lived, that of the wanderer is the most wretched. But pray tell me a little more about your master. Are his mother and father yet alive?"

"Poor old Laertes still lives," replied the herdsman; "but he hates life, and wants to die. His wife is no more, and he is wasting away, comfortless. She died of grief for her lost son."



RETURN OF TELEMACHUS.

"How sad!" groaned the old beggar. "But pray now, Eumæus, tell me the story of your own life. You were, while very young, snatched away from your native land, were you not?"

Then Eumæus told his tale, — how he was sold as a little slave to Laertes, and how kind Laertes always was to him, more like a father than a master.

"Then you have been happier than I," replied Ulysses; "for in your master, who might have been cruel, you have found a friend indeed."

While they were conversing, the ship which bore the young heir of Ithaca rapidly approached the shore. When Telemachus was able to leap on the quay, he said to his companions, —

"All of you go to the city, and I will see what my herdsmen are about."

When he reached the house of Eumæus, the dogs recognized him as he approached the gate, and saluted him with joyous barkings.

"Some one is coming," said Eumæus to the old beggar, "whom my dogs know and love; I wonder who it is. I will go out and see."

When he went out and found Telemachus, he flung his arms around him, and said with his heart full of joy, —

"And is it thou, my dear boy, who art come to bless my eyes? I never hoped to see thee any more. I feared the worst from thy reckless voyage."

When the prince and the herdsman entered the cottage, Ulysses got up from his chair, and would have moved away; but Telemachus prevented him, saying, —

"Pray do not move from your chair. I never would take a seat which was occupied by a stranger with gray hairs like yourself. Sit where you are, my friend, and I will take this lower place."

Eumæus then produced the remains of yesterday's feast, and all three had something to eat, after which Telemachus said, —

"Whence did this stranger come, Eumæus?"

"He came from Crete," answered Eumæus, "and he has sought and had my protection; and now, I pray, give him thine."

"How can I do that?" asked the young man. "I want protection myself among those proud and insolent suitors. However, old man, I will give you such things as I can; and I advise you to stop here, for here you will be quite safe. If you were to go to the palace, you would be insulted and cuffed, and perhaps killed; and I should be powerless to protect you, and it would only grieve me deeply to see you come to harm."

Ulysses was not pleased with these words of his son. He thought they savored of cowardice. So he said, "I am sorry to see a brave youth a slave to the power of evil men. Have you no one to help you to clear the palace of those wretches? I wish I were the son of the great Ulysses, or that these withered arms of mine were as young as your own! Oh that Ulysses himself would come back! Were he to do so, that day would be their last, the cowards! And if I were you, I would rather die than see the hand of violence wronging a feeble stranger or a delicate maiden. I would die sooner than I would see the wealth of kings consumed by the drunkard and the glutton!" And the eyes of the old beggar glowed as he spoke these brave words.

Telemachus admitted the truth of all the old man had said, and then he bade Eumæus go and tell the queen privately of his safe return.

"Ought I not to inform your grandsire Laertes also?" asked Eumæus.

"Oh, yes, let him know the good news at once! Bid the queen send one of her attendants to tell him all about my arrival."

When Eumæus had gone on his errand, Minerva descended and gave Ulysses leave to make himself known.

"The hour is come," said she, — "come at last. Go and take vengeance on those unworthy men." She then waved her wand; and in a moment the old beggar was transformed into the noble-looking King Ulysses. Dressed in robes of majesty and glorious in his show of strength, he fairly overawed his son, who thought him a god, and quaked with fear.

"I am no god," said Ulysses. "I am a man of few days. Oh, my son, my son, I am thy father!" He strained Telemachus to his bosom, and wept tears of joy.

"Surely thou art not my dear father," gasped out the young man; "you only say it to add to my sorrows, by palming a false joy upon me."

"If I am not Ulysses," replied his father, "you will never see him. For twenty years have I been tossed about, and now at last I am at home — blessed be the gods!"

Telemachus was convinced now that his father's arms were wound around him; and he wept tears of joy upon his father's neck. After a few moments of transport the son asked the father how he had found his way to Ithaca; and the wanderer replied that his safe return was due to the kindness of the Phæacians. He then spoke to Telemachus about the treasure hidden in the cave, and asked him particularly about the names and numbers of the impudent suitors, that he might know how to attack them, whether alone or with the aid of others.

Telemachus replied, "My father's fame as a hero is blown all over the world; but even he, great as he is in all martial exercises, will hardly venture to attack these suitors without help. For there are more than a hundred of them, and all are accounted men of valor. It would be rushing on certain death to assail so large a party."

"Ay, but we have the gods on our side," replied Ulysses, piously, "and what other help do we need? To-morrow morning you shall

repair to the palace as usual, and Eumæus shall conduct me thither in the disguise of a beggar. If they insult me, as most likely they will, bear it as calmly as you can, and strive by prayer and good words to restrain the insolence of the suitors until I give a sign to produce those arms I left behind in the palace armory when I set sail for Troy. And now keep my secret from everybody until the hour of vengeance is at hand."

When evening came, and Eumæus returned to his cottage, Minerva had changed Ulysses once more into a ragged old beggar-man.

CHAPTER XI.

ULYSSES, DISGUISED AS A BEGGAR, VISITS HIS PALACE.

MORN had hardly come ere Telemachus was up and away to tell his mother all that had happened since he last saw her. When he reached the palace, he leaned his spear against the wall and bounded in to greet the smiling servants and joyful queen. All were very glad to see the young prince again. The suitors greeted him with a bland courtesy which concealed falsehood beneath it.

When Telemachus had bathed, and refreshed himself with some breakfast, his mother asked him whether he could give her any tidings of her absent husband. He replied by recounting all that had happened to him at Pylos and Sparta. He said that he had heard that Ulysses was most surely still alive, but detained by magic influence in a lonely island somewhere.

The queen sighed deeply, and drooped like a tall lily in a storm.

Seeing her agony, the prophet Theoclymenus thought it well to say his say, which amounted to this, —

“Ulysses is of a surety alive, and is even at this moment considering in his mighty bosom how best to take vengeance on these wicked suitors.”

“Heaven grant it may be as you say,” said Penelope; “and may all who befriend me be happy!”

The unwelcome suitors, having set up a sharp appetite at quoits or archery, ate a very good dinner; and while Ulysses, as a mean-

looking old beggar, was walking slowly toward them, their doom was at the door, and they knew it not.

In due course the king, disguised by rags and tatters, was led by his herdsman to the city gate. They chanced to meet Melanthius the goatherd, with two attendants. The haughty Melanthius flung an insolent look at the old beggar, and asked Eumæus where he was going with that ill-looking fellow. "If he wishes to escape a broken head he had better steer clear of the palace," said he. And then he contrived to spurn the old man with his heel.

Ulysses felt strangely tempted to strike the proud aggressor to the earth; but he remembered himself, and restrained his rage, while Eumæus, boiling with hate and anger, prayed the nymphs of the fountain to restore his good master to them all. Melanthius saw his lips moving, and he asked him what he was muttering. He cordially detested Eumæus, because he was faithful; and he often vowed he would have him sold some day as a slave. Then the insolent goatherd swaggered into the palace and sat down to dinner.

The old beggar-man now talked in a very loud voice about all the wonders he beheld. Eumæus did not pay much attention, for he was considering what to do for the best. At length he determined to go within, and leave the old beggar at the gate. When this was mentioned to Ulysses, he said he was quite content. He was well used to the exercise of patience and could submit to whatever turned up.

As he was saying this much to the herdsman at the gate, a noble dog, named Argus, heard his voice, pricked up his ears, and at once recognized his dear old master. Argus had been, years ago, a great pet, but now he was held in no regard; he lay neglected on the dunghill. He strove to crawl, with his last remaining strength, to his master and kiss his feet; and a tear stole down the cheek of Ulysses when he beheld his old dog's affection.

"Who is this noble dog that lies neglected here?" asked he.



ULYSSES RECOGNIZED BY HIS OLD DOG ARGUS.

"Surely an old hound that has the remains of so much beauty and sagacity deserves some care."

"Oh, had you seen him once," replied Eumæus, "you would have seen a dog indeed, — swift as a deer and strong as a lion; with a piercing eye, and a scent that never led him wrong. But now he is very old, and no one cares for him. There is no kindness among the servants now!"

The fine old dog took one last long look at his master; and then, as if joy were too much for him, he fell down dead.

Telemachus, seeing the herdsman enter, made him a sign to sit by his side at the feast. From the place where they were, they could espy Ulysses leaning on his staff just outside the door. So Telemachus said, —

"Do please take this plate of viands to yonder poor old man, and then tell him to go round to each guest at the table and ask their charity."

The old beggar received the plate of food with many thanks, and while he ate and drank listened with pleasure to the strains of the minstrel. When the music ceased, the old man hobbled round the hall, asking some pittance from each guest in a very sorrowful voice.

"Eumæus the herdsman has let this troublesome old fellow in," said Melanthius. "I know that, for I saw them together before dinner."

"Why do you allow such wretches to come into this place?" asked Antinous, with anger. "Surely we have people of this sort in plenty already."

Telemachus reproved the speaker, and told him he might easily be bountiful in giving what did not belong to him.

Antinous gave a saucy answer, and threatened to do something big; but the others mostly gave the old beggar something, so that when he had gone round, his srip was fairly well filled.

Returning to Antinous, he said, "Give me something; for you

seem the noblest of them all. Act according to your nobility, and I will praise your name wherever I go. I have seen better days, and when I was rich I always helped the poor and needy; but I have had great reverses, and am now craving the pity of other men."

Antinous pushed him away with an angry refusal; and Ulysses left him, saying, "Thy mean soul and handsome body are ill matched."

This remark provoked the ill-tempered fine gentleman to pick up a stool and hurl it at the old beggar. It struck him on the shoulder, but did not move him from his place. He only shook his head and vowed vengeance in his soul.

"I do not grieve for the hurt," said he, "but for the cause of it; but if there be any such thing as justice, Antinous shall die for the evil he has done to a harmless old man."

"Hold your tongue, you old wretch, or we will have you flogged and thrown to the dogs!" retorted Antinous.

Every one, however, condemned the violence of Antinous, and some ventured to reprove him. For all they knew a god might be wandering about in that beggar's mean disguise.

"May the god of day punish Antinous for that disgraceful blow!" said the queen. She then asked Eumæus to call the old man to her side, for she hoped she might hear some tidings from him of her wandering husband.

"The queen wishes to talk with you," said Eumæus.

"I will wait upon her at sunset," replied the old beggar. "It will be quieter then, and she will hear what I have to say with the greater comfort."

"Whoever he is, he is a wise man," said the queen, when his answer was carried to her.

As Ulysses was sitting by the gate, a sturdy, ill-conditioned beggar, named Irus, drew near to it. "Two of a trade can never agree,"

says the old proverb; and Irus at once eyed Ulysses with great dislike.

"Go your way," said Irus, "or see if I won't make you!"

"We both live on alms," replied Ulysses, mildly; "and why need you envy me for being here? All riches are from the gods. Do not, however, provoke me to anger, or, old as I am, I may do you a mischief."

"Come on and feel what I can do!" retorted the other beggar. "How is it possible for an old fellow like you to resist *me*?"

"Hurrah!" shouted Antinous. "Here's some fun! Look at those two surly knaves beginning to quarrel. Let us egg them on from words to blows! Now, then, beggars," continued he, "this mess shall be the reward of him who is the better man."

"But," put in the wily Ulysses, "I am an old man, remember, and have the less chance of victory. Still, I feel hungry, and should be glad of the prize; and if you gentlemen will promise to be neutral, I don't mind fighting for the dish."

Telemachus assured the beggar that all should be done in fairness, and then the two combatants prepared for the fray.

When Ulysses threw off his upper garments and revealed his mighty arms and chest, the suitors trembled for Irus, but not so much as he trembled for himself. Pale and sick, he was for sneaking away.

"Can you decline fighting with an old man?" asked Antinous. "If you won't fight, we will send you to the tyrant Echetus, and ask him to cut off your ears and nose."

And so the wretched Irus was obliged to fight. He struck Ulysses a heavy blow on the shoulder,—a blow which the other repaid with interest, for he broke his jaw and felled him to the earth.

"There," said the victor, "frighten the dogs, but be kind to the strangers and poor men, lest a worse fate overtake thee."

The suitors praised Ulysses, and treated him to food and wine. He conversed with them on the vanity of human things, and the many reverses man is born to suffer.

The queen, attended by her ladies, soon after this descended into the hall, when she dazzled every one with her grace and beauty. It was with great satisfaction that Ulysses heard her declare that her love for her absent husband was, and would be, unchangeable.

"Too well do I remember the day of his departure," said she, "and his farewell words."

After a while she retired; and her husband, venturing to reprove some disorderly goings on, was the butt of the saucy princes, who called him an idle vagabond. He retorted; and his retort stung Eurymachus to madness. Picking up a footstool, he hurled it at Ulysses with all his strength. He ducked his head, and the stool flew over him and knocked down a young cupbearer.

Telemachus had then to interfere and order them all away; and after drinking another cup in honor of the gods, the half-tipsy revellers separated.

CHAPTER XII.

ULYSSES RECOGNIZED BY HIS OLD NURSE.

THE next few hours were spent by Ulysses and his son in quietly removing the weapons out of the armory and hiding them in some distant part of the palace. As they were thus occupied, Minerva, without being seen, shed a blaze of heavenly glory around, and assisted them greatly in their task. When this was done, Penelope, attended by her ladies, descended again to the hall of the palace, and had an interview with the supposed beggar, in whom she felt a lively interest without knowing why.

“What is thy name, and whence comest thou?” asked the queen.

“Lady, do not wish to know,” replied the wanderer. “Let my sorrows sleep; for if you arouse them, they will seem to you but like the ramblings of a drunken man. Yet if you insist on it, I must obey you.”

The queen said she should like much to hear his story, so he went on thus, —

“I am a Cretan, nobly born, and my name is Æthon. The great Ulysses came to our country once, driven by stress of weather; and he stayed with us twelve days, until the wind shifted, and he could get away.”

“And what was Ulysses like when he was in your country?” asked the queen.

“It is so long ago that I can hardly remember what he was like,” answered the old beggar. “But I do well remember how he wore a robe of purple, clasped with a gold clasp, and how much he was admired by our Cretan girls, who came in crowds to gaze upon him.”

Much more the beggar said; and in all he said, the wife recognized her dear husband, and she bade the old man be forever welcome in her house for his sake.

"Lady," said the beggar, "your beloved husband is yet alive. I know he has been kindly received by the Phæacians, and they are preparing to forward him to his home, which he will soon grace with his presence. Nay, I believe before another moon is full, Ulysses will be enjoying his own again."

"When time has proved the truth of your strange story, my friend, what thanks shall I not owe you? But, alas! I can scarcely believe such happiness is to be mine!"

Penelope then gave orders that the old man was to have every attention. A warm bath was made ready for him, and a good supper; but the old man would not part with his tattered clothes, which he chose to wear as "the livery of a sorrowful mind."

Euryclea, the old servant mentioned before, had charge of the warm bath; and while Ulysses was preparing for it, the old woman's observant eye saw a well-known scar on his knee, which had been made years ago by the tusk of a wild boar on Mount Parnassus, at which time he was a mere boy, and showed that uncommon spirit which never forsook him afterward. When the aged servant recognized the scar, she could only exclaim, "My son! my king!" Ulysses placed his open palm on her mouth, and bade her keep his secret at present.

"I will keep it as secret," said she, "as if my ribs were made of steel and my heart a tomb of marble."

When the hero had bathed, he resumed his tattered dress, and returned to the queen. She told him she was like the nightingale, mourning all night over her sad catalogue of sorrows, and revolving in her mind which course she should pursue. Should she remain as she was, or should she choose the noblest of the suitors as a second husband?



THE OLD NURSE RECOGNIZING ULYSSES.

“If I resolve on this course,” said she, “I shall choose the man who can use with the most skill the famous bow of my dear Ulysses.”

“Well, do so,” said the old beggar; “and perhaps Ulysses himself, if he chances to hear of your decision, will come forward and carry off the prize.”

“Your words give me strange comfort,” said the queen. “But now I go to weep and watch, and you, my friend, sleep as you can, and good-night to you!”

Ulysses stretched himself on a skin, and one of the servants spread a carpet over him; but he could not sleep. The people thought he was slumbering, but he was not; and he witnessed many scenes of lawlessness and riot, which gave him great pain, and almost provoked him to rise and knock some of them down. But he restrained his passion; and Minerva quieted his perturbed spirit, assured him of her help, and hushed him to sleep as if he were a child.

Meanwhile Penelope could not rest; and she invoked Diana to speed her ebon dart and send her down among the dead, sooner than she should be compelled to marry one of the hateful suitors.

Some of her broken sentences were overheard by her husband when he awoke from a short but refreshing nap; and he leaped from his bed with a prayer to Jove for help. A clap of thunder, coming from a sky of brightest blue, showed that his prayer was to be answered. Another omen was granted. Close by was a place where the women were employed grinding the corn; and Ulysses overheard one of them ask Jove to confound all the suitors, and to let this day's feast be their last. Ulysses was glad to hear the poor toiling woman say this, for it seemed to him to portend the near approach of the long-looked-for day of retribution.

Telemachus, rising early, asked Euryclea, whom he met, whether the old beggar had been treated with proper attention.

“He had a bed of down offered him,” replied she, “but he would have nothing but a skin to lie upon.”

Then up came Eumæus, and asked the old beggar how he had been treated by the suitors since they last saw each other.

"Not very well," replied he, with a stern look.

Soon after, one of them spoke insolently to him; but the patient man still bottled up his wrath, and sitting down at a little table, broke his fast, Telemachus showing him great courtesy, much to the disgust of the company.

One of the sauciest of them, a man named Ctesippus, insulted the old man by hurling a fragment of a calf's foot at him, — as a token of his esteem, he said.

Telemachus was in a great rage at this, and swore that he would clear his father's house of such brutal wretches, or die in the attempt. His words were followed by a long silence.

"A just rebuke," said the gentle Agelaus. "And now, Prince, as there seems no hope of your father's return, do pray get your mother to marry one of us, and then you can reign over your own house, unmolested by any one of us."

"I swear," said the young man, "that I will never drive my mother away from this place, which has been her home for so many years."

Several strange omens now occurred, all presaging a coming woe to somebody or other; and while men were wondering, and expecting something strange and awful, the seer, Theoclymenus, arose, and predicted a speedy and terrible fate to all the suitors, — a prophecy which was met by loud bursts of merriment.

"I leave you all forever," said the prophet, in a solemn tone. "I leave you, lest I should by chance share your dreadful doom."

So saying, he departed; but the suitors, unmoved by the dark bodings of the seer, went on cutting their jokes at Telemachus, who could hardly keep his sword in its sheath.

The noisy revel was ended at last, and another was ordered for the evening; but ere the supper hour arrived, these fools were to taste of another feast, — the feast of death!

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TRIAL OF THE BOW.

PENELOPE, moved by Minerva, now declared that she would marry the man who could bend the mighty bow of Ulysses, and send an arrow through some brass and silver rings. She ascended a stair, attended by her maidens, and with a brass key unlocked the door of the sweetly scented chamber where the royal treasures were kept. Amid the glittering heaps of money and jewels was the greatest treasure of all, — the bow and quiver of Ulysses. Penelope took down the famous bow, and laid it across her knees; and as she did so, she shed tears. Recovering herself, she descended to the hall, carrying the bow in her hand, — the bow, and the “arrows winged with fate.”

“Now,” said she to the suitors, “listen to my conditions. He who can bend this bow, and send an arrow through twelve rings, — for him will I forsake this palace, and him I will make my wedded husband.”

“How is it I feel so happy,” thought Telemachus, “when my own mother threatens to leave me? — Come, gentlemen,” he said, “and do your best for this great prize, — a prize richer than all Achaia can show, or Argos, or Mycene; a woman almost a goddess! Come, then, flock to this trial! I will show you the way, and I too will try what I can do with my father’s famous bow!”

But Telemachus was not man enough to bend the bow. “I find I am not yet strong enough,” said he. Then, turning to the others, he offered them the bow, which they all tried, one after another, to

bend, but in vain. It was evident Ulysses had been more than man, or men had grown weaker than they used to be. The suitors got melted lard, and soaked the obstinate bow therein, but it was of no use; the bow would not bend for any one of them.

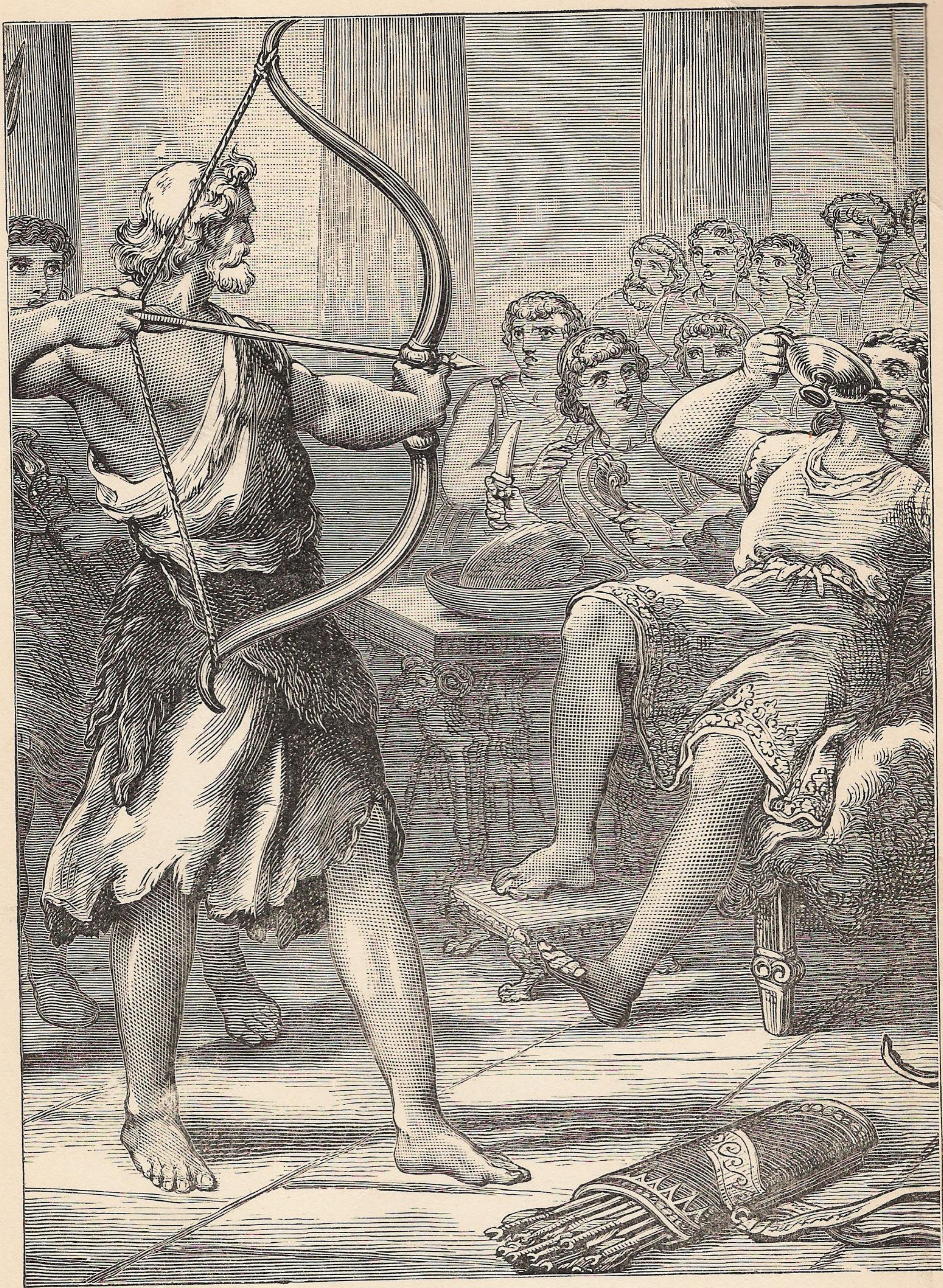
Then it was that the old beggar-man went up to Eumæus, who was, for the nonce, a master of the ceremonies, and asked if he might be allowed to try.

"You must be drunk to think of such a thing," said Antinous. "Have you no common-sense, you miserable old man?"

But Penelope and Telemachus interfered, and bade Eumæus hand the stubborn bow to the old beggar, to see what he could make of it. The old man, while fingering the bow he knew so well, gave private orders to have the gates of the palace shut and locked, that no one inside could escape.

When Ulysses felt his old bow again, he eyed it carefully, to see whether time or aught else had injured it. As he was doing this, the suitors made, as they usually did, many insolent remarks. "Look, how he scans the bow!" said they. "Perhaps he is a bowyer," observed one. "Perhaps he steals them," said another. Ulysses took no notice of their ill-natured remarks, but he kept turning the bow round and round, and then in a moment he drew it, with the greatest possible ease. When he did so, thunder and lightning broke from the sky. Ulysses now picked up an arrow that lay handy, and fitting it to the bow-string, sent it whizzing through all the rings at which he aimed.

"You see, my son," said he to Telemachus, "my hand has not forgotten its ancient cunning. And now," raising his voice so that all could hear him, "let our guests comfort themselves in their disappointment with a sweet repast." He then gave a meaning nod to his son, who knew very well what he intended, for in a moment he girded on his shining sword, and took his place by his father's side.



ULYSSES SHOOTING AT ANTINOUS.

When all was ready for the punishment of those who had so long deserved it, Ulysses said to them, —

“I have won one prize to-day, and now I am going to try to win another. One mark my arrow has hit, and now I must aim at another. May Apollo, the god of the bow, be my helper!”

As he was speaking, he let fly an arrow at Antinous, who was just then drinking wine out of a golden bowl. Right through the throat of the miserable man flew the dart; and down he fell, in the agonies of death. Terrible was the fright which convulsed the crowd of suitors. They all dispersed as fast as they could in search of arms.

“You have slain our bravest comrade,” said one, “and you shall die for it yourself.”

But Ulysses frowned upon them and said, —

“You dogs, you have had your day! You did not fear me when I was away, and you dared to rob and insult the innocent. Neither shame nor fear have stayed your hands; but now the hour of vengeance is come, and you must die!”

“If thou art indeed Ulysses,” said Eurymachus, the only one who could speak for fear, “thy wrongs are certainly very great; and the sole cause of them was the guilty man who lies bleeding at thy feet. And since the main cause of offence is dead, pray spare us; and we will repay thee what we have eaten of thine, with good interest.”

But Ulysses would not hear of any such bargain.

“I scorn your offers,” said he, “and the only choice I give you is, resist me, or die as you are.”

Then Eurymachus, looking round on the rest, said, —

“Come, draw your swords, every one of you, and let us drive this fellow out. We can easily do it if we try.”

With these words, he rushed like a lion upon Ulysses, who, however, soon finished his career, by turning his own sword against himself, and plunging it into his bosom.

The next to die was Amphinomus; and now Telemachus, fear-

ing his father might be overpowered by superior numbers, said, "Shall I not run quickly, and bring some arms?"

"You are quite right," replied his father.

So away went Telemachus to the room where all the helmets, spears, and shields had been deposited. Choosing four helmets and shields, and eight spears, he returned, and rapidly armed Eumæus, Philætius, his father, and himself. All this time the keen arrows of the mighty bowman were drinking up the spirits of this suitor and that. They were now four well-armed and daring men against a crowd of terrified ones, and they would easily have overpowered them, had not the traitorous Melanthius stolen to the room where the arms were — Telemachus having left the door ajar — and brought arms to the suitors. And Ulysses would have probably been slain, had not Minerva come to help him. The goddess assumed the shape of Mentor, and Ulysses was overjoyed to see this fresh accession to his little band. Mentor did not fight, but inspired Ulysses with fresh courage by a few burning words; and then the goddess turned herself into a swallow, and perching on a rafter, looked down upon the scene of bloodshed.

"Come," said Agelaus, "Mentor is alarmed and has left Ulysses. Now is the time to pierce his proud bosom." Then came a smart shower of lances at Ulysses, but his good armor protected him; and then he and his three friends each slew a man. The others, seeing this, retreated, and an end was soon made of them all.

An unhappy priest, named Leiodes, begged for mercy, but mercy was shown to none that day; and he died with the rest, as he had sinned with them. To none, we say; yet one poor life was earnestly begged by Telemachus, — it was the life of Phemius the bard; and one more was spared, — namely, Medon the herald, who was found hiding under a table, wrapped in the skin of an ox.

"Live," said the terrible Ulysses, "that the world may hear from you how much safer it is to do good than to do evil."

When all was over, Ulysses sent for old Euryclea, and charged her to tell him truly who of the women were faithful servants and who were not. She mentioned the names of twelve bad ones out of the fifty who formed the household.

"Let those twelve then come hither, and wash these blood-stains away, and then let them be led to the court, and put to death."

Such was the terrible verdict of the outraged master. The palace was then purified; and Euryclea went to her mistress to tell her the astounding news.

CHAPTER XIV.

ULYSSES MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS WIFE AND FATHER.

PENELOPE was asleep when Euryclea burst into her room with her tidings. "You asleep?" said the old woman. "Asleep! when Ulysses is alive and well, and the men who vexed you are all dead. Arise, my lady, for it is high time!"

"You must be mad," replied Penelope, "to talk such nonsense. I wish you had not awakened me, for I was having such a pleasant dream. Why am I to come to my miserable self again, for I can only weep, and curse Troy? Had one of my young women done it, I should have been very angry; and I only spare you my displeasure because you are old and faithful."

"Madam, I hate a lie," said the old woman, with warmth; "and I say once more, Ulysses is alive, and is in this house, and has already wreaked his vengeance on his enemies."

"Is it possible?" cried the queen, springing up in a transport of delight. "Is my Ulysses here indeed? But how could one man, however great a hero, slay all those strangers?"

"I did not see it done," replied Euryclea; "but we heard the noise, and many a groan we heard, and that was all. We did not dare to go near the scene of conflict; but I know there is a heap of dead bodies outside the palace, and the hall is even now being washed. Up, Mistress, and haste to meet your husband!"

"You rave, Euryclea! If the troublesome princes are really dead, some god must have killed them. I know well they deserved the vengeance of the gods, and they may have felt it. But as for Ulysses, my dear husband, he will never, never return!"

“He will! he will! nay, he has returned!” replied Euryclea. “Just attend to me, dear Mistress. I have seen a scar on his knee, — the very scar made by the boar of Parnassus before he went to Troy; and I swear by the gods your long-lost husband is at this moment in this house!”

The queen still doubted; but she descended the stair, half in fear and half in hope, and sat down by the fire, where she remained for some time in silence, until her son came to her and said with surprise, “Why do not you fly at once to my dear father? Are you offended with him?”

She answered that she was afraid to believe he was alive. It must be some impostor, some adventurer come to personate her dead husband.

Ulysses was rather pleased to hear this, but he said, —

“I will soon convince my wife that I am really her husband, who has come back to her after the changes and chances of twenty eventful years.”

So he ordered the bath to be made ready, and the cheerful lyres to sound, and he bade the young men and maidens to make merry with songs and dances, in order that those who chanced to pass by the palace might say to one another, “Well, this long-talked-of wedding must have come off at last.”

Ulysses did this to divert public talk from the slaughter of the suitors; for he was afraid that the destruction of so many powerful lords might raise him up many enemies even in his own country, where no doubt some of them had made friends and comrades.

When the king had bathed, he put on glorious apparel, and his friend the goddess caused him to look his best. He now went to Penelope, and asked her whether she knew who he was. She at length admitted it, though she still showed much caution, lest she might be mistaken after all.

Her husband mainly convinced her by relating certain secrets

about a bed, which he had made before going to Troy. His description of this curious bed answered so precisely to it that Penelope felt she could doubt no longer. She flew into his arms, begging him not to be angry at her doubts. It was excess of caution, she said, not any lack of love.

Then was Ulysses very happy, and he and his wife had a long talk with each other, — she relating all her home troubles, and he his narrow escapes in the battle-field, and his strange adventures among the people whom he had seen in his wanderings.

When day broke, he took his way to the house of his venerable father, Laertes. He first armed himself with great care, and also his son, and a few faithful friends; for he still feared the vengeance of some of the Ithacans, who had been too friendly with the unworthy men whom he had slain.

The souls of all those dead men were led by Mercury into the place where departed spirits go; and as they trod the long and weary path, they vented sad cries. At length they reached the ever-blooming meadows of Asphodel.

Agamemnon's ghost met them, and asked, wondering, how it was so many noble princes were coming down at the same moment into the place of the dead; and one of them, named Amphimedon (who had been a friend of Agamemnon), told the sad story, — how he and the rest, Ulysses having been long absent, strove to mate with Penelope, and how she, like a wily woman as she was, put them off by promising to marry one of them as soon as she had finished a funeral shroud she was making for old Laertes. This shroud was for three years unfinished; for whatever she did by day, was picked out by night. But she was compelled to finish the shroud in the fourth year; and just when she had done so, her husband came back, and concerted plans with his son for their ruin.

Agamemnon was much interested in the story, and said Ulysses was happy in having a wife like Penelope. He was thinking of his



ULYSSES MAKING HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS AGED FATHER.

own hard lot; for he went home only to be butchered by his own detestable wretch of a wife, named Clytemnestra.

Meanwhile, Ulysses went to pay a visit to his dear old father, who lived in a small but well-kept mansion, with a few servants.

Our hero found the old man dressed in a warm but coarse cloak, with well-worn gaiters and gloves, pruning his fruit-trees.

"Everything here seems well cared for but yourself," said Ulysses to the old man. "Who is your master? And is this indeed Ithaca? I am seeking a great friend of mine, a native of this island, and his father's name was Laertes. Do you know anything of that family?"

"Alas, thy friend is dead!" replied Laertes; "but you will oblige me by saying how long a time has elapsed since you saw that same friend you speak of. That friend was my son. If ever a man was born to be unhappy, he was that man; and I am his equally unhappy father. Ah, my son is lying somewhere unburied! But who are you, and whence did you come?"

"I came from Alybas," replied the crafty Ulysses, "and I am called Eperitus. I was driven on your shore, as I was coming from Sicily, by an adverse wind. It is about five years since I met Ulysses, and we agreed to meet here in Ithaca; but, you see, the Fates have decreed it otherwise."

The old man began to cry and cast ashes on his head; and when Ulysses could bear the sight of his grief no longer, he ran and kissed him over and over again, with these words, "Oh, dear Father, behold thy son, — so long desired and so much loved!"

Laertes would not at first believe that the stranger was really his son; it was only the sight of the well-known scar on his leg which resolved his doubts. Ulysses added another proof of his identity; he detailed the numbers and sorts of fruit-trees in a certain orchard which he well remembered.

When Laertes could doubt no longer, he clasped his son to his bosom; and the first transports of joy being over, his fears for the

safety of his newly found son were excited, lest the citizens of Ithaca and Cephalonia should arise and punish him for the deaths of so many princes.

"Oh, be at your ease, my dear Father," said Ulysses, carelessly. "The gods will protect us. Come and join our banquet at the palace."

While feasting and rejoicing were going on there, the startling news circulated through the city about the death of the suitors. Crowds of people gathered round the palace; and the dead were examined one by one. Those who were of Ithaca were buried in Ithaca, and those who belonged to neighboring islands were sent away in ships to be buried where their homes had been.

The father of Antinous, named Eupithes, arose and said, —

"Ulysses is a great man, and great are his deeds. First, he took away a numerous train of ships and men, and those he contrived to lose at sea. Then he comes back, and reddens his hand in the richest blood of his country. Arise, then, ere he flies for safety to Elis, and take vengeance on him, or else be ashamed forever!"

But Medon spoke, and declared that it was no mortal hand, but the arm of a god, which had laid the suitors low.

And then another speaker arose, named Halitherses, who said that the suitors had only met the due reward of their evil deeds. Great was their sin, and just their punishment, he thought.

But he could not control the greater number, who ran to arm themselves, that they might overwhelm the hero who had slain their friends.

And now, in the council of the gods, Minerva asked Jove whether Ithaca was to have peace or war; and the king of gods decreed that Ithaca should be blessed; that the past should be forgotten; and that Ulysses should rest long in his kingdom, blessing his people, and being blessed by them.

Ulysses had finished his happy meal with his father, when he

thought that he should like to know how things were going on outside; so he sent a trusty spy, who brought word back that an armed force was approaching. The king at once armed himself, his father, and his ten friends, and they sallied forth to meet the army of Eupithes.

Minerva whispered to old Laertes, "Breathe a prayer, and then hurl thy lance at the enemy." He did so, and his spear pierced Eupithes, and slew him. Then, after a short struggle the friends of Eupithes were dispersed with great slaughter, which was stopped by Minerva's orders. Nothing now remained but for the travel-worn Ulysses to enjoy as much happiness as a man can enjoy. It was much enhanced by the remembrance of a thousand dangers, toils, and sorrows, safely surmounted, and forever passed away.

THE END.

